



GREAT MAN

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**Foreign Languages Publishing House**

**DPR Korea**

**2025**

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## Preface

One hundred and thirteen years have passed since the birth of President Kim Il Sung (April 15, 1912).

As a real man, not as a legendary person, he always mixed himself with the people sharing sweets and bitters with them. It is not surprising that the Korean people venerate him with pure hearts and warm human feeling.

Kim Il Sung led the Korean revolution throughout his great career. Having embarked on the road of the revolution at the age of 14, he led to victory an underground revolutionary struggle, two revolutionary wars, two stages of social revolutions and postwar rehabilitation and several stages of socialist construction. That is why the Korean people call him a peerless statesman, outstanding leader and iron-willed military commander.

But he was a great man before being an outstanding leader and revolutionary. While experiencing the stirring decades of the past 20<sup>th</sup> century under his leadership, the Korean people keenly realized that the career of an outstanding leader and revolutionary is that of a great person, and that a revolution led by such a great person is the

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force driving history forward.

Kim Il Sung could not but be called a heaven-sent man.

His whole life was characterized by high intellect, warm humanly affection, indomitable spiritual will and commoner's trait. He showed the way ahead of the Korean revolution and the Korean people with his high intellect and tended the garden of humanly love with his boundless affection for humanity. His strong spiritual will was a source of the Korean people's dignity and victories, and his ennobling commoner's trait was the cornerstone of their single-hearted unity.

His beautiful yet steadfast and ennobling life serves as a great textbook for the traits and life of many people. He is alive in the hearts of the Korean people.

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# INDUSTRIOUS INQUIRY

# 1

What should be counted first among President Kim Il Sung’s great personal features is his high intellect.

His high intellect was not something he was endowed with, but a fruit born of his view of valuing intellect more dearly than anything else, his strenuous thinking and industrious inquiry.

He built up the tower of knowledge inch by inch and illumined the way ahead of the times, history and the masses of the people with reason and truth.

He did not cease inquiry even for a moment throughout his life, regarding the Korean revolution as his major and the people as his teachers, in the course of which he provided the banner for the people’s struggle and motive force for epochal changes and victories.

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## **Practice and His Extraordinary School Career**

Man's intellect is a social product, and the most important means of cultivating it is education. It is undeniable that almost all the world-class scholars and literary men were graduates from distinguished universities.

Kim Il Sung never attended a regular university or learned in the comfort of a study, but he acquired intellect which defied any comparison in terms of height and range.

His extraordinary school career clearly reflects the pain of a ruined nation.

After his father Kim Hyong Jik (July 10, 1894-June 5, 1926) moved the theatre of his revolutionary activities to Linjiang in Northeast China in the autumn of 1919 owing to the suppression by the Japanese imperialists, he enrolled his son in the first-year class at Linjiang Primary School in the spring the following year.

Then, as his family moved to Badaogou, Kim Il Sung had to continue his schooling in the second-year class at Badaogou Primary School from the summer of 1921 to early 1923.

After that, he walked 400 kilometres from Badaogou to

Mangyongdae, his native place, true to his father's intention that a man must know his own motherland well, and enrolled in the fifth-year class at Changdok School in early April 1923 and studied there until January 1925, when he received the news that his father had been arrested again by the Japanese imperialists.

With a firm determination that he would never return before Korea became independent, he went back to Northeast China on foot, where he enrolled in the sixth-year class at Fusong Primary School No. 1 in early April 1925 and studied there until the spring of 1926.

After his father died in June 1926, he entered Hwasong Uisuk School, a two-year-course military and political school, on the recommendation of independence campaigners, and studied there until he left it in mid-course in early December that year.

In January 1927 he enrolled in the second-year class at Yuwen Middle School in Jilin in pursuit of progressive ideas and left it again in mid-course in the autumn of 1929 to become a career revolutionary.

This is all his career of regular schooling. Moreover, his schooling could not be systematic as he had to enter or leave a school in mid-course each time.

And when he studied at Hwasong Uisuk School and Jilin Yuwen Middle School, he was not merely engrossed in learning, but was engaged in revolutionary activities to put an end to the misery of the Korean people under the military rule by the Japanese imperialists.

In the autumn of 1929 he was arrested by the Chinese reactionary police, which was under the influence of the Japanese imperialists, and imprisoned in the Jilin jail till early May the following year. In the prison he conceived an ideology and path for the Korean revolution to take. After being released from prison, he chose to become a career revolutionary by going deep among the people who were writhing under exploitation and oppression.

However, it was not easy for a middle-school student to decide to give up his schooling for the revolution. In his memoirs *With the Century*, he recollected his complicated feelings of those days as follows:

“As I left Jilin without having finished school, I was tormented with various thoughts: The thought of my late father who had sent me alone all the way to my home town in the winter cold, telling me to study in the motherland, who had taught me Korean history and geography when I returned home from school, and who, in the last moments of his life, had told my mother that he had wanted me to get middle school education, so she should follow his intention even if it meant her living on grass; the thought of my mother who would be disappointed at the news of my having left school one year before my graduation after the three years of unceasing effort she had made to earn my school fees by sewing and laundering until her fingers were sore; the thought of my brothers who would be

no less disappointed; and the thought of the sorrow of my father's friends who loved me as their own son and gave me financial aid, as well as the sorrow of my school friends.

“But I thought at least mother would understand me. When my father had left Sungsil Middle School and become a career revolutionary, she gave him her tacit agreement. So I believed that even though her son had left middle school, or even a university, she would not disagree if it was for the revolution and for the motherland.

“I think it was a turning point in my life when I left school and went among the masses. It was at this time that my underground activities and my new life as a career revolutionary started.”

Indeed, his school career bespeaks the misery of the colonial Korean young people of the past who could not fulfil their desire for learning no matter how hard they tried. And this highlights his high intellect all the more. It is because intellect is not an inborn ability, but a social product and, accordingly, there cannot be an intellectual world built on no foundation.

However, Kim Il Sung built the tower of intellect block by block with his persevering inquiry and thinking. He showed an extraordinary spirit of inquiry from his early years. He never overlooked an object or phenomenon but ceaselessly thought until he understood its essence inside out.

When four years old, he comprehended the principle of how a rainbow comes into being. And he disassembled a gramophone to gain a complete understanding of its mechanism. These stories show how strong his sense of inquiry was in his childhood. During his days at primary school, he was known as a pupil who asked many questions. He asked so many questions that his teachers sometimes found themselves at their wits' end.

From his early years he considered mysticism to be a sort of malady, and thought that those steeped in mysticism tended to become fools. There is a saying, *A fat head and weak brains*. He felt the greatest pity for such people. If you perseveringly delve into things and get to their bottom, there is nothing mysterious—this was his unique view of and attitude to thinking and inquiry.

In particular, learning truths in reality was a major method of inquiry he applied from his early years.

As mentioned above, his family often moved as his father, leader of Korea's anti-Japanese national liberation movement, had to frequently change place of living due to the suppression by the Japanese imperialists and to the need of his revolutionary activities. When he was 6 years old, they moved to Ponghwa-ri from Mangyongdae and, at 7, back to Mangyongdae. From 8 to 14, Kim Il Sung moved back and forth from Mangyongdae to Northeast China. In this course, he realized the miserable situation of the

exploited and oppressed people and the nature of the oppressors and exploiters, and at the same time developed fervent aspirations for justice and truth and laid foundations of a revolutionary and scientific world outlook.

As he had to blaze the trail for the Korean revolution on his own, he cultivated a strong sense of responsibility and zeal for inquiry, which pushed him to revolutionary practice, a new type of “university.”

He never attended a regular university or institute or worked on a professional academic or media organ. In short, he never indulged himself in the comfort of a study for thinking and inquiry.

This does not mean, however, that he did not have any chance for receiving education at a regular university. In the early 1930s the Communist International and his comrades advised him to enter a university in Moscow, sponsored by the Communist International.

But he told them: In order to find out the strategy, tactics and methodology for the Korean revolution, we should go among our people; we should find out the methods for accomplishing the Korean revolution while mixing ourselves with them and sharing life and death with them; I will not go to the Soviet Union but go among our people to learn the theory and method of the Korean revolution.

In his talk to senior officials of the Workers’ Party of Korea and the state on December 5, 1984, Kim Il Sung said:

“I have been conducting a revolutionary struggle for nearly 60 years during which I have guided the underground revolutionary struggle, the armed struggle, the democratic and socialist revolution and the work of socialist construction. During this period I did not learn the knowledge required for the revolution and construction from any school teacher. As a matter of course, I acquired some knowledge by reading books, but I learned most through practice by moving among my revolutionary comrades and the people and sharing good times and bad with them.”

In his talk to officials about their work method and style on January 1, 1988, he recollected.

In those days I thought: Our people know best about the Korean revolution; in order to find the correct strategy, tactics and methodology of the Korean revolution we must go among our own people; we should go among them and share weal and woe with them to find a way to accomplish the Korean revolution. Instead of going to the Soviet Union, I went among our own people to learn the theory and method of the Korean revolution. It was really fortuitous that I went among the people and carried out the revolutionary struggle without going to the Soviet Union to study.

The objective he set for himself when he chose to become a career revolutionary was to learn all that the people embodied, by regarding them as his teachers. Whereas the revolutionary practice

was his major in learning knowledge and truth, the people was his excellent teachers.

At the banquet arranged in honour of the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his birth, he said in deep emotion that the people had always been his devoted protectors, kind benefactors and excellent teachers.

While looking back on his life during a talk to a journalist delegation from CNN International visiting the DPRK in April 1994, he said, “The people are the most resourceful and best-informed teachers for me. They embody a mix of philosophy, economics and literature. Consequently, I always mix with them and learn from them.”

These words were a crystalization of the history of his revolutionary leadership. As he said, he always regarded the people as his teachers throughout his life and made it a rule to learn from them in and out of work.

He always put the people’s freedom and happiness and the victory of the revolution and construction at the centre of all his thinking and inquiry and identified the seed and solution of his inquiry in the simple and straightforward remarks of the people.

In a talk to a delegation from the Peru-Korea Institute of Culture and Friendship on June 14, 1980 he said: “What the workers and farmers say may sound commonplace, but it contains the truth.”

For him, who loved intellect more than anybody else, the people

were not merely exploited and oppressed ignorant beings.

While talking with Kim Il Sung during his visit to his motherland in 1991, Son Won Thae, a Korean resident in America, expressed admiration for him for being well versed in all the affairs of the country including complicated economic issues and providing detailed guidance.

Kim Il Sung said to him frankly, “You said that I am good at economic calculation, even though I am not a graduate of economics; I always learn from our people. I always go among the people, teaching them or learning from them.”

He found in the ordinary people and revolutionary practice solutions to all problems—for what the true inquiry of a revolutionary should be made, what should be the goals of inquiry he must attain devoting his whole life and what and how should he do to hit the high goal of inquiry.

Kaoru Yasui, first Director-General of the International Institute of the Juche Idea, once said, “As I have realized that President Kim Il Sung regarded the people as his teachers and learned from them throughout his life and so he could author such a great man-centred ideology as the Juche idea and other encyclopaedic thoughts and theories, I can hardly express my admiration. Indeed he is the greatest of the great.”

Yasui, Professor and Doctor of Law at Hosei University of Japan,

won the International Lenin Prize for Peace and German Prize for Peace for his proactive role against atomic and hydrogen bombs in the 1950s, and worked as the founding head of the International Peace Institute in 1965. He was also a renowned international affairs expert, who had visited almost all the countries over the world and met numerous celebrated politicians.

But after he came to know about the Juche idea, he visited the DPRK several times in the early 1970s and met President Kim Il Sung. Since then he became a devout supporter of the idea and revered the President.

In an article he wrote: “Nearly 50 years have passed since I came upon Marxism-Leninism, during which I learned many lessons from the historical legacy left by the authors of the doctrine. Yet, I always felt something missing during my study of it. But Kimilsungism, with its encyclopaedic depth and breadth, provided clear answers to all the questions which I grappled with.” This shows he was deeply impressed by Kim Il Sung’s profound knowledge and his thoughts and theories.

He recollected: President Kim Il Sung’s knowledge covered all the fields, ranging from politics, philosophy, the economy to literature; he had so deep and ample knowledge of international affairs that even I, an expert in that field, was struck with admiration; he possessed a clear opinion of his own on each issue.

He wondered how the President, a statesman, could have such versatile knowledge. Later, he happened to have a talk with a delegation of social scientists from the DPRK, during which he came to know that the secret was the fact that the DPRK's leader had regarded the people as his teachers and learned from them since the days when he set out on the road of revolution.

Herein lay his extraordinary personality which distinguished him from the statesmen and other great men of the past.

Even when he had reached 80, he continued to visit factories and rural villages to listen to the opinions of the people and explore new things. In the course of this he became a man of versatile knowledge, who understood the people's desires more than anybody else, mastered all fields including politics, the military, the economy and culture, and advanced perfect strategy and tactics for the Korean revolution.

Indeed, he regarded the people as his best teachers and the revolutionary practice, as the highest school and his major, and adorned his school career with strenuous inquiry.

He regarded the great cause of the revolution, not an individual area of study, as his major and inquired into it throughout his life, always going among the people.

To take the field of thoughts and theory alone as an example, he evolved easily-understandable ideas and theories for carving out the destiny of the masses of the people and made them encyclopaedic ones

for resolving the enormous and complicated problems of the Korean revolution.

He put forward many ideas and theories for achieving national liberation, class emancipation and human freedom and building a party, state, armed forces, the economy and culture, typical examples being those of the anti-imperialist, anti-feudal democratic revolution, socialist revolution and construction, and transforming all the members of society on a revolutionary and working-class pattern and making them intellectual. As they all represent the spirit of the contemporary times and at the same time are original and perfect, they are ideas and theories with eternal vitality.

While putting the concrete reality of the Korean revolution as the main objective of his inquiry, he never overlooked foreign countries' advanced experiences and realities, but closely studied them. He scathingly opposed isolationist and nationalist tendencies in inquiry, be it of progressive ideas, the economy, science or culture. What he was against was the tendency to blindly follow others and rely on others—not approaching others' experiences with a critical view but swallowing them—which is an expression of lack of a sense of independence. This did not mean that he pursued isolationism.

He often said: We should strictly guard against the tendency to worship big powers; notwithstanding this, we should not take to pursue closed-doorism or isolationism as a king of the past did

nor oppose introduction of advanced science and technology from foreign countries.

The following happened when he was visiting the European countries in 1984. Looking round an automobile works in the former Czechoslovakia, he inquired about the details of automobile production, ranging from the time spent for building a truck, its weight and fuel consumption to the kind of metal used in making the engine.

The officials of the host country accompanying him were deeply impressed by the fact that President Kim Il Sung, a veteran statesman recognized by the world, was so interested in the production of automobiles, minute technical details of an individual economic sector.

He was interested in anything, no matter how small it appeared to be, if it could contribute to the prosperity of the country.

Indeed, Kim Il Sung's school career was extraordinary as he acquired high intellect through unremitting inquiry in the practical struggle of the revolution, always mixing himself with the people.

## Assiduous Reading

Human life separated from books is inconceivable. Anyone with sound reason and passion for learning loves books and reading.

Kim Il Sung was such a kind of man. It is difficult for anyone, who has shouldered the heavy burden of the revolution and construction of a country, to always carry books about him and find worth of living in reading.

But Kim Il Sung loved books more than anybody else; he did not stop reading throughout his life. His unusual zeal for reading was a manifestation of his ennobling outlook on books and reading.

He did not regard the book as a mere transmitter of knowledge but as a major weapon of life and struggle and as a silent teacher. He used to say that the book is a silent teacher that teaches people knowledge and truth.

After looking round his native home in Mangyongdae and the relics preserved at the home and its surrounding area, the editor-in-chief of the Soviet periodical *Children's Literature* asked him one day in February 1987 which books influenced him and what they had taught him that was of help in the difficult days of his life.

In his answer he said: My ideology, belief and will was not

cultivated in a day or two, but during the long course of struggle and life and the starting point was my young days when I enjoyed reading; the books I read in my early years served as a teacher who taught me the truth about struggle and life and a fellow traveller who helped me to embark on the true journey of life.

His family was so poor that it could not even afford to give him enough money for his school fee. Given the situation, it was very difficult for him to buy books he wanted to read. So during his middle-school days he used to purchase books with more than half of the expenses of the library of the school by availing himself of the opportunity of his being elected the chief librarian and read newspapers by subscribing to them for a month at once.

The following anecdote shows how much he loved books and reading.

Shortly before the liberation of Korea (1945), he went to Moscow with several commanding officers of the Korean People's Revolutionary Army to attend the discussions of operations against Japan.

One night, sleeping in a guest house, he had a dream: In a spacious room filled with books, Kim Jong Suk, an anti-Japanese war heroine, told him to read them as he liked, adding that he would not be able to read them all in his lifetime.

On return from Moscow he told Kim Jong Suk about the dream. She kept in her heart what he said; after liberation she filled the shelves in the study in his home at the foot of Mt Haebang with

books of different fields, and said to him that he could read books to his heart's content. He was so pleased that he posed for a souvenir photograph with her in the study.

He was so fond of books and reading that he dreamed a dream of books.

In general, the period when one reads a lot is limited. But for Kim Il Sung, who regarded books as indispensable sustenance for a revolutionary and the most important fellow traveller on the road of revolution, reading which was a hobby formed in his childhood was consolidated to a daily routine throughout his life.

He was busier than anybody else leading two revolutionary wars in defence of the destiny of the people and social revolution of various stages and dealing with all the state affairs, ranging from Party work, army building, economic construction and external work. He also had to meet numerous political and social figures from various countries who came to the DPRK to see him.

But he always managed to find time for reading. For him the time and place for reading were not fixed. He read newspapers and news bulletins early in the morning, books and magazines of various kinds during short breaks and novels and books of different fields at night.

Already in his teens he read preceding classics including *The Communist Manifesto*, *Capital* and *The Fundamentals of Socialism*, which are difficult to understand even for adults. He also read

*Biography of Ri Sun Sin, The Tale of Chun Hyang, The Tale of Sim Chong* and other books dealing with the history of Korea and life of the past and many revolutionary works of foreign countries and historical books including *On the River Amnok, Mother, The True Story of Ah Q, Biography of Lenin, A Boy Wanderer, Blessing, The Nineteen, How the Steel Was Tempered, Chapayev, Gadfly* and *Monkey*.

He mastered several foreign languages. To take Chinese alone as an example, he spoke it so fluently as to make an impromptu speech without manuscript. He read political books and sci-tech magazines published in foreign countries even at an advanced age.

For him, books were a beacon that illumined the way ahead. That was why he assiduously read throughout his life.

Admiring the height of intellect he had reached by dint of painstaking inquiry and reading, a literary man once said that humankind must be far taller than now to comprehend the height.

### **Reading the People's Minds**

Kim Il Sung was well versed in human psychology. He was able to read the minds of the people from various strata. He regarded the people as the most valuable beings and always mixed himself with them.

When approaching someone, he tried to understand his or her innermost feelings first. He would talk to them or give them tasks after he had a correct understanding of their psychological state in detail. He would meet individuals face to face to understand their psychological state even before giving them small tasks or asking for simple information.

It is by no means easy to understand others' minds correctly as their inner feelings or psychological state are not directly expressed at all times. A saying goes that you can measure the depth of a river however deep it may be, but a man's mind is unfathomable. It means that it is very difficult to understand the innermost feelings of others.

But Kim Il Sung always attached great importance to fathoming out the people's innermost feelings, especially their sentiments and desires under specific situations.

As he met people from various social strata and with different occupations, he paid heed to understanding all the details of their sentiments, emotions and vocational habits.

He was so considerate that young ones would whisper their secrets to his ears and old ones would tell him their opinions and advice frankly. He tried to understand the people's feelings and emotions in detail even in the pressing and complicated battle situation before he approached them accordingly.

He was in his teens when he started to engage in the revolutionary

activities. But wherever he went, he was welcomed and respected by the people as he was more sympathetic towards them than anybody else.

The following happened in the mid-1930s when Kim Il Sung's unit was active in the Wangqing area in Northeast China, based in a guerrilla zone, during the anti-Japanese war. One day the unit came across an unfamiliar girl on a march from Xiaowangqing to Gayahe. At first she looked at the approaching ranks with a smile on her face. But as the men came closer to her, she sullenly whizzed past them, her head dropped. Then one of the soldiers stole a look at her over his shoulder before going on immersed deep in thought. After a while he looked backward again.

Nobody noticed it, but Kim Il Sung felt something in their behaviour and the expression of his eyes. He called him out of the ranks on the quiet and asked him in whispers who she was to him.

He awkwardly answered that she was his betrothed, and that he wanted to show her what he was now—a soldier of the anti-Japanese revolutionary army. Kim Il Sung, sympathizing with the ardent yearning of the lovers to see each other, told him to go and meet her and gave the marching ranks a rest order. Very pleased, the soldier flew to his betrothed. Later on, the two lovers were always exemplary for others in the anti-Japanese struggle for the country and nation.

Many similar things happened thereafter.

Love is powerful. But it cannot produce blossoms unless it is carefully tended and protected. Through the long period of the revolution, Kim Il Sung was considerate of the love of young people and helped it to bloom beautifully with fatherly tenderness and concern.

Kim Il Sung attached importance also to people's desires in fathoming out their minds.

Whereas understanding people's feelings and emotions was the first step in reading their minds, grasping their desires and demands correctly was another major target.

He regarded it as one of the most important jobs to correctly grasp the desires and demands of the masses of the people, and paid close attention to them throughout his revolutionary career.

In his lifetime he met countless people different in nationality, career, age, occupation, class origin, social status, and also in desires and demands.

He made it a rule to deal with everything according to their desires and demands. When visiting a factory, he unhesitatingly went into its workshops filled with hazardous gas considering the desire of the workers there to see him.

A story about Kim Il Sung leading the officials to have a right attitude to and view on the complaints lodged by the people shows how much importance he gave to their desires and demands.

The people's complaints are a sort of request they make to the

Party and state organs, enterprises and working people's organizations to prevent the infringement of the rights or interests of individuals or collectives or to rehabilitate their violated ones. It is customary anywhere to investigate the actual state of a complaint, once it is lodged, and take necessary measures for settling it before closing the case.

But Kim Il Sung thought this was insufficient for satisfying even their unexpressed demands. On several occasions including his speech to officials of the WPK Central Committee on October 18, 1966, he referred to the new attitude to and view on the people's complaints that officials must be possessed of.

Criticizing some officials for their tendency of seeing themselves as "Lord of Hades" and dealing with complaints presented by the people bureaucratically and carelessly, he earnestly said: When they receive a letter of complaint, officials must deeply think how agonized and grieved the complainer must be as to write the letter and find scientific solutions to settle the problem.

He defined it as the first and foremost element of the ability of a revolutionary to know man and correctly read the minds of the masses of the people. Work with people is, in essence, the work with their minds, that is, the work with their ideological feelings. Only when a revolutionary knows the people's ideological feelings correctly and, on this basis, mobilize them, can he commit no formalistic, subjective, bureaucratic and dogmatic errors and execute all work with success.

For this reason, Kim Il Sung often said to the officials that they should grasp the psychology of the people in detail as primary school teachers would do their pupils, and work with them on this basis.

He himself mastered the psychology of the masses of the people from different social strata through his protracted revolutionary struggle.

He once said that he knew well the psychology of schoolchildren and soldiers because he attended primary and middle schools and served long in the army. So, when his unit was passing by a melon field during the anti-Japanese armed struggle, he could notice that the soldiers wanted to eat melons and gratified their desire. And later he instructed officers of the Korean People's Army to supply rice cake, noodles, corn on the cob and melons sufficiently to their men lest they should miss their homes. When he visited a factory or a farm, he unceremoniously mingled with the workers or farmers there, holding their hands stained with grease or soil.

The following happened in January 1951 during the Fatherland Liberation War, when the Supreme Headquarters of the Korean People's Army was situated in Konji-ri after the army switched over to counterattack.

Although the war entered a new phase in favour of the Korean people, the living conditions in the Supreme Headquarters were yet to improve.

One day an officer came to the guard company, and said to them that Supreme Commander Kim Il Sung would probably visit them soon and inquire about their living. Then he advised them to tell the Supreme Commander that they had taken boiled rice and meat soup for their breakfast, because he would be very sorry to know that his men were eating soup without any solid stuff.

Shortly afterwards, Kim Il Sung came to the company. He dropped in at the mess hall first. Having learned they had finished their breakfast, he asked them what they had taken for the breakfast.

They answered that they had taken boiled rice and meat soup as they had been told to.

Dubious, he opened the lid of a cauldron.

He looked at the washed cauldron for a while before asking again what meat they had taken. As the soldiers looked awkwardly at each other at a loss for an answer, an officer answered that it was frozen pork.

“You are making a good living, aren’t you? Look at this. The cauldron is washed so clean that nobody will think you boiled meat in it,” he said.

The soldiers laughed despite themselves.

After looking at them sympathetically, he said in a low yet serious voice, “I have never lied to you. So I hope you are not telling me a lie, either.”

As all other soldiers silently hung their heads low, the youngest one

told him frankly that they had taken boiled cereals and soup with no solid stuff in.

Presently, Kim Il Sung severely criticized the officer, saying that it was very wrong for him to have told them to tell a lie, and that he should have provided them with good food however difficult the situation might be. Then he informed him of the places where there were rice and pickled mackerel in store and told him to bring them and supply them to the soldiers.

So the company soldiers could be provided with rice, meat, fish and vegetables.

It is natural that the Koreans admire such a considerate man, who took parental care of them, and are proud of having performed miraculous feats in the revolution and construction led by him. Doctor of human psychology—this is a title the Korean people gave him, who regarded understanding their minds as the first process in dealing with all the state affairs, big or small.

## Extraordinary Memory

A truly wise man is the one that possesses unusually powerful memory as well as clear discernment. And only such a man can be called a representative of human intellect.

Kim Il Sung was possessed of extraordinary memory; he exactly remembered almost all things he had heard, seen and experienced while leading the Korean revolution for scores of years.

Even at his advanced age, he clearly remembered the uncountable historical facts, events and the lives of those related to them, as well as the events in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and numerous people.

The following anecdote shows how vividly he remembered what he had read even after many years had passed.

Once he asked an official if he had ever read *Kaebiyok*, a magazine published in Korea before its liberation from Japan.

The official answered he had not.

Kim Il Sung told him that the magazine had carried good articles before asking him to find some copies for him.

Several days later, the official reported to him that he had obtained some 70 copies.

Very pleased, Kim Il Sung told him that the magazine had carried a travelogue of Manchuria and article about the prides of Korea's eight provinces contributed by Ri Ton Hwa, a modern philosopher of Korea. Then he said that Ri had described in the travelogue what he had seen and heard during his trip as far as Xingjing County, China, including the details of the customs of the Chinese people, and that the article about the prides of Korea's eight provinces also contained many interesting things.

Hearing him, the official was struck with wonder and admiration at how he could so vividly remember the contents of an ordinary magazine he had read almost half a century ago.

Kim Il Sung clearly remembered not only the things and facts he had learned while reading and studying, but also what he had witnessed and experienced.

He remembered an enormous amount of information, ranging from big and small events in the history of the Korean people's anti-Japanese armed struggle, in the period of building the Party, the state and the army after Korea's liberation, the Fatherland Liberation War, socialist revolution and construction to trifling things which many people pay little heed to.

To the admiration of others, he not only remembered vividly the causes and processes, conditions and reality, consequences and significance of the events he had experienced, but also recalled them in an instant.

On July 20, 1983 an official who had worked close to Kim Il Sung for a long time reported to him the impression of foreigners, who had visited the Ryongpho Revolutionary Site.

The following day Kim Il Sung called the official to his office and recollected that the Ryongpho Revolutionary Site is located in Poptong County, Kangwon Province, and he had inspected the command of a KPA unit stationed there from April 26 to 29, 1951.

He stood by the window for a while lost in thought before he suddenly asked the official, “You accompanied me in those days, didn’t you?”

But the official could not remember however hard he racked his brains.

Only after Kim Il Sung said that he had ordered him to drive his broken-down car back, the memory of the night he spent alone guarding the car dawned on him.

That day Kim Il Sung set out on a journey to inspect the frontline. But because his car broke down on the way, he had to continue his trip by another car and the official remained to guard the broken-down car. As the enemy stragglers were roaming about and the weather was very cold at night, he had a really hard time of it. Such a frightening night should have lasted long in his memory, but it had slipped out of his mind with the passage of time.

But Kim Il Sung clearly remembered the night some 30 years before.

Almost all his memory of the historical events and facts was centred on the people associated with them.

In particular, he remembered the whole course of the lives of all his comrades in the revolution who had passed away.

One day in May 1964, he visited a unit in South Hwanghae Province during his field guidance in the province.

When a senior official of the unit was saluting him, Kim Il Sung looked at him closely.

On his way back he asked an official whose son the official of the unit was.

The official answered he had no idea.

Saying that whenever he met young officials he was reminded of his comrades-in-arms who had passed away, Kim Il Sung asked him to trace back the family background of the official.

He had identified something similar to his fallen comrade-in-arms in the face of the official the instant he saw him.

Several days later when he received the report that the official was the son of the political commissar of the Helong guerrilla unit during the anti-Japanese armed struggle, he was very pleased as if he had found a lost son of his own.

Saying that the man took after his father in the eyes and he was reminded of Ri Yong Chan, his father, the moment he saw him, he described the political commissar's disposition and characteristic features in detail.

Then he recollected that he had been an excellent political commissar and an anti-Japanese war veteran had guaranteed his eligibility for party membership.

Officials present there were struck with wonder at how he could vividly remember the facial features of his comrade-in-arms he had

worked with scores of years before. What surprised them more was the fact that the father of the official had held the position of political commissar for less than a year.

In fact, Kim Il Sung met him only a few times—when he presided over a meeting of political workers and heads of underground revolutionary organizations held in a cottage in Dalizi in China to restore the damaged revolutionary organizations in the wake of the May 30 Uprising and when he gave tasks during the days when he made preparations for forming an anti-Japanese armed unit after the Mingyuegou Meeting in the spring of 1931. (The May 30 Uprising was a “Leftist” adventurist riot masterminded by factionalists in May 1930 in the eastern Manchurian areas in China to mark the fifth anniversary of a massacre in Shanghai on May 30—Tr.) After he organized an armed unit, the work of the Helong guerrilla unit was reported to him through liaison officers.

Given that Kim Il Sung recognized in an instant his son who had some features similar to him, it is not difficult to guess how many people were in his memory. It was not the Korean people alone who remained long in his memory.

One day in 1994, after almost half a century had passed since the end of the anti-Japanese war, Kim Il Sung met the wife of Chai Shirong, a Chinese associated with his anti-Japanese revolutionary struggle, in Pyongyang. After exchanging greetings, he said that it must be in

August 1945, when he parted with her and that her second son, who came with her, must have been around two at that time.

Then he recollected the days when he had fought together with her husband sharing sweets and bitters with each other.

He informed her of the real name of her husband and his career, saying: He was the head of a police station somewhere in Helong County before he enlisted in a Chinese nationalist anti-Japanese armed unit; he fought together with me in the battles of Dongning county town and Luozigou; he and I worked together also in the Soviet Union; after he moved the theatre of his activities to northern Manchuria, he fought as the commander of the Fifth Corps of the Northeast Anti-Japanese Allied Army; he and I conducted many joint operations when I went to northern Manchuria for the second time; although he was about 20 years my senior, he always respected me as his senior in the revolution.

The officials present there, not to mention Chai Shirong's wife, were overwhelmed with surprise.

Kim Il Sung remembered in the concluding years of his life so many foreigners and even the name of a policeman or landlord in his village he had once overheard in his childhood.

Kim Il Sung was not a historian but the head of state, who had to attend all the state affairs. It is hardly believable for such a man to remember uncountable historical facts and truths and the people

related to them. However, he did all the things he had seen, heard and experienced in his life.

He did not regard each historical moment as merely a point in time associated with a past truth and event but a historical chapter from which he could draw lessons and experiences for the present and future.

In his memoirs *With the Century*, he analyzed the historical backgrounds of the September 18 Incident and the Korean war and defined the methods common to imperialist aggressive wars and nature of the invaders.

Recollecting the backgrounds of the incident and the war, incidents started by different imperialist forces at different time in different places, he made a scientific analysis of the common features inherent to them—those who ignited the two incidents behaved in a way inappropriate to the imminent wars to cover their sinister aims.

Whereas the masterminds of the September 18 Incident, overture of an all-out war to invade Manchuria in 1931, had drinking sprees on the verge of the incident, Truman, the then president of the United States, enjoyed a “rest” at his villa at the time of the outbreak of the Korean war in 1950.

He disclosed that the common features in the September 18 Incident and the Korean war bespoke the craftiness, impudence and aggressiveness that are incidental to imperialists. With regard to the

attitude and viewpoint towards various events and facts occurring in different historical times and under different circumstances, he wrote:

“Some say that history is a sequence of non-repetitive events, but we cannot entirely ignore the similarity and common trends existing in different events.”

As he wrote, history is not merely an incidental sequence of non-repetitive events.

All the historical facts and events have their own causes, processes and consequences, but they contain something in common, a truth, that is consistent in the history of mankind. Although all the facts and events are separated from one another, each of them contains valuable experience and lesson which cannot be neglected.

Because he grasped this truth of history, Kim Il Sung could remember such a large number of historical facts and events throughout his life.

He could remember them throughout his life because he was possessed of unusually powerful memory.

Another feature of his memorizing ability was that he etched most vividly in his memory the things, however novel and complicated they might be, at the moment he came across them. He could memorize everything in the shortest time and on the highest level of accuracy.

The following anecdote arose at Tito's memorial centre during his visit to the former Yugoslavia in 1984.

A bear skin was exhibited at the centre. The guide explained to Kim Il Sung that it was the skin of the bear that Tito had caught in Bosnia-Herzegovina and for which he had won a gold medal at a world festival.

When the guide finished his explanation, Kim Il Sung said that he had heard from Tito during his visit to the DPRK that he had won the first prize in a bear-hunting game for his score of 493 points.

The officials accompanying him and staff of the centre were struck with wonder and admiration for him who correctly remembered every detail of the story he had heard seven years before.

He made no mistake in remembering things, even the figures he had overheard long before.

His memory was exceptionally secure and durable. Failing of memory with the passage of time is common to everybody, but such a phenomenon was hardly found in him.

In his memoirs *With the Century* he wrote:

“Time wears too many things away and buries them in oblivion. They say that all memories, both happy and sad, fade away with the lapse of time. However, this seems not to be the case with me. I can never forget any of my fallen comrades-in-arms, probably because the farewells between the dead and alive were such bitter events. Their images are vivid in my memory as if on hundreds and thousands of clear prints.”

Clear prints on which his life full of ups and downs are etched—this is an appraisal by history of his unusual memory.

His memoirs are an immortal encyclopaedia which gives a clear account of the great career of him, who had assumed the responsibility for the times and history, country and revolution, and the destiny of the people, and victoriously led the struggle to pioneer and develop them for scores of years.

The memoirs contain his clear reminiscences of innumerable people he met a long time before, even half a century before, and details of their lives and complicated historical facts and events. All these were based on his memory of them.

Kim Il Sung is a paradigm of human intellect showing the people the meaning of true intellect and its new height.

## **Torch of Foresight**

Foresight is an important index characterizing the level of human intellect.

The present is an extension of time linking it to the past and at the same time to the future. In this lapse of time, man reflects on the past, sees through the present reality and presages the future.

Reflections on the past teach him experience and lessons, the

insights into the present help him adopt scientific means and ways, and the accurate predictions enable him to shape his destiny in an active and purposeful way.

In this sense, it is the foresight that is most difficult and challenging to possess.

Scientific foresight is a torch of a great man.

A truly great man regards not the power of money or tight rein but outstanding foresight as one of his most powerful weapons to employ in enlightening the masses of the people and leading the social development.

Kim Il Sung was a great man who, possessed of outstanding foresight, gave perfect answers to numerous issues, theoretical and practical, of the revolution and construction, and led the people's cause of independence with an eye to the future.

Foresight is an ability to see what is likely to happen in the future.

Although it is one of the major mental weapons with which to decide the success or failure of all human activities, a mere wish is not enough to possess it. So, a saying goes that an inch ahead is dark.

Kim Il Sung's foresight was his extraordinary mental capacity, which he acquired, as he had to solve the problems arising in the Korean revolution in an independent way while blazing the trail in the revolution.

When he was opening up the path of the Korean revolution, the

knottiest problem for him was that there was neither a textbook to refer to nor a pioneer to turn to for guidance. However, he could not carve out the destiny of the country and nation by relying on foreign forces. He could not advance the Korean revolution even a single step forward without solving all the problems by his own efforts and in an independent way.

Given the situation, he set it as a principle to judge and decide on everything in a scientific and independent way.

Scientific and reasonable judgements and decisions are prerequisite for the success in establishing independent lines and policies and carrying them out.

Hence, he made it his iron rule to correctly preestimate the prospect of the revolution and judge the future subjective and objective conditions and changes in the situation before formulating any line, policy, strategy and tactics.

The agrarian reform in the liberated Korea constituted the most important part of the anti-imperialist, anti-feudal democratic revolution, which was carried out on a priority basis after the victory in the war for national liberation from Japanese colonial rule.

The reform was an original social transformation, which was unprecedented in history in defining the land to be confiscated and the targets of struggle and the stage-by-stage course of carrying it out.

Worthy of special note is that it was executed on the principle

of laying preconditions for the socialist revolution to be carried out without fail in future.

At that time peasants made up 80 per cent of the population of Korea, a backward agrarian country. Their ages-old desire was to farm on their own land.

Therefore, the land had to be distributed to them in order to realize the wish of the broad masses of the people and to win them over.

In view of this practical requirement, Kim Il Sung successfully carried out the agrarian reform. During the reform, the land of 44 000 landlords was confiscated and distributed to 720 000 peasant households.

At the same time he took measures for ensuring that the reform created favourable conditions for the future transition to the socialist revolution and socialist development of the country.

As early as in the days when the law on the agrarian reform was drafted, he, envisaging the agricultural cooperativization to be carried out in the stage of the socialist revolution, ensured that the law stipulated that peasants shall not be allowed to sell, rent or mortgage the distributed lands.

This prevented the revival of sharecropping system and rich peasants while granting the peasants ownership of land in conformity with their earnest desire. In addition to this, a restrictive measure was taken to ensure that the rich peasants tilled

their own land and did not employ permanent farm hands. It was aimed at limiting the development of the rich peasant economy and creating favourable preconditions for the future socialist cooperativization of agriculture, whose major target of struggle was the rich peasants.

Thanks to his outstanding foresight, a thoroughgoing agrarian reform was carried out in a matter of less than a month, and it created solid groundwork for implementing the socialist transformation of the rural economy at the best possible level after the Korean war.

His foresight also gave birth to the line of building a country, independent in politics, self-sufficient in the economy and self-reliant in national defence, as a strategic line of the Korean revolution. Independence in politics, self-supporting in the economy and self-reliance in national defence constitutes an important guiding principle in the Juche idea authored by him.

He believed that the present one was an era when independence is the lifeblood of a country and nation and the revolution and construction are carried out with every country and nation as the unit. Based on this scientific insight and judgement of the lawful development of the era of independence, he confirmed the road of independence as the road of the Korean revolution.

With his scientific foresight Kim Il Sung made clear judgements and predictions of the current of the times and the trend of the situation.

He always watched international events and developments closely, and generalized the analyses of individual events to make the most accurate predictions.

A senior Russian politician, who visited the DPRK after the collapse of the Soviet Union, said: Many had been critical of the DPRK for not joining the CMEA (Council for Mutual Economic Assistance) and for advocating a self-sufficient economy; however, member nations of the CMEA have all gone to ruin, but only the DPRK with a self-sufficient national economy maintains socialism; the DPRK has succeeded in its socialist construction.

What he said can be interpreted to be praise of the times on Kim Il Sung, who saw into the distant future beyond a century.

His foresight found more conspicuous expression in the severe trials of the Fatherland Liberation War (June 25, 1950-July 27, 1953), when the destiny of his country and nation was at stake.

With a scientific insight into the fact that coastal defence would become more important with successful advance by ground troops, he deployed the troops of two army corps in the east and west coastal areas in keeping with the successes achieved on the ground front. His strategic line of intensifying coastal defence proved absolutely correct in the whole course of the war.

From 1951 up to the end of the war, the US aggressors attempted time and again to land in Wonsan on the east and Hanchon on the

west and to drive the front up.

However, they could not achieve their strategic goal and in the end knelt down before the Korean people.

As early as 1952 when the war was still at its height, a postwar reconstruction plan was already prepared and the ex-students were called back from the theatres of war to their universities. All these stunning facts were attributable to his great foresight with which he saw into victory in the war.

One day a foreign correspondent visited the Supreme Headquarters to interview him about the US aggressor's large-scale "new offensive" and the prospects of the war.

Being sorry and nervous that he might bother the Supreme Commander who shouldered the heavy burden of war, he entered the room, only to find it so quiet to his surprise.

The Supreme Commander was looking at something on the operations table in a corner of the large room and a young private was answering him.

The correspondent gave a quizzical look to the officer who had guided him to the room.

The officer whispered that the Supreme Commander was checking up the private's study.

The correspondent still could not understand what was going on.

The officer said again that the Supreme Commander was helping

the soldiers, who were to be sent abroad to study for the postwar reconstruction.

The correspondent was all the more surprised.

*Then, isn't it obvious that Supreme Commander Kim Il Sung is sure of victory in the war?*

Feeling confident of something, he turned back and sneaked out of the room.

The officer followed and asked him why.

“All right. My interview is over,” said the correspondent in an assured tone.

With such foresight Kim Il Sung led the revolution and construction to victory, bringing all the glory to the Korean people.

His foresight is inconceivable separated from his incomparably profound knowledge and broad vision.

A man of rich knowledge and extensive practical experience gained through his life, he always guarded against the tendency of persisting with the old experience and refusing to take a new viewpoint in finding a solution.

One day in October 1954 he visited Iap-ri, Jungsan County, South Phyongan Province.

The chairman of the management board of the local farm had lost more than thirty of his family members and relatives at the hands of the US imperialists in the period of the temporary retreat

during the Fatherland Liberation War.

Kim Il Sung felt so sympathetic to him that he stayed with him for the night.

Next day he walked through knee-deep weeds to a place. It was a marshy area with no proper path. He was lost in thought while walking along the shore of the swamp. Then he got on board a boat to look around the swamp.

Making his way through reeds, he finished his field survey, and sat with the local peasants. He said: If the swamp is reclaimed by building embankments, it would make fertile paddy field of about 100 000 *pyong* (a Korean traditional measurement unit that equals to about 3.3 square metres), and the rice harvested there would raise your living standards to those of a well-to-do middle peasant.

It was so unbelievable. They wondered if the swamp with ripples would make that much land.

While living there for decades, they had seen it every day and gone across it by boat now and then, but never tried to measure the land under the water.

Kim Il Sung, however, was saying for sure that it would make about 100 000 *pyong* after a single survey on a boat.

It was not long before his prediction proved right. The local peasants all turned out in the reclamation project. After completing the project, they measured it.

They could not believe their eyes at the fact that it was exactly 100 000 *pyong* as he had anticipated. They realized once again that his rich knowledge, profound experience and outstanding wisdom made foresight in the true sense of the word.

Kim Il Sung's foresight was a fundamental basis that made his leadership over the Korean revolution and construction the wisest and the most scientific.

# ARDENT WORSHIP OF THE PEOPLE

## 2

Kim Il Sung was a man of warm affection. Born into a family that regarded human feeling as the most important part of its tradition, he cherished it deep in his heart under his parents' education and through dire poverty. He was human love incarnate, who embarked on the road of the revolution with this love and regarded it as the most powerful weapon in his leading two revolutionary wars to victory and writing a new chapter of creation and construction.

The affection he bestowed upon the Korean people was itself the motherland, the revolution and his world of justice and truth.

His affection was so warm and everlasting that the Korean people still call him *father*. As the saying goes, even mountains and rivers change their appearances in ten years. Nevertheless, his infinite and ardent fatherly affection for the people remains unabated in the hearts of the Korean people regardless of the passage of time.

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## **The People Are My God**

Affection is an element of the ethics inherent in the human world. It is what makes the world so beautiful and enables humans to shape their destiny in unity and cooperation.

Kim Il Sung's affection for the people was a passionate feeling of worshiping them as his god, absolute trust in them and sincerest and deepest affection for them. His boundless affection was expressed in the great generosity and magnanimity, with which he took care of all the Korean people and numerous foreign friends, and ennobling revolutionary comradeship that would bring flowers into bloom even on a rock.

His affection for the people was an element of his ennobling personality.

It is no wonder that all those who had ever met him were unanimous in saying that they were attracted by his ennobling affection and virtue. It was their shared experience that a broad smile on his face, sonorous and friendly voice, boundless generosity and magnanimity attracted them like a magnet and made them feel his warm affection.

His family in his native home was the soil in which his great human affection was rooted.

A man starts his life in a family. Although the family is small, his parents and other family members teach him the laws of life and imbue him with human character and virtues.

The family tradition of Kim Il Sung's native home, which regarded human feeling as the most important part of it, made him cultivate the affection for the humanity, his family, nation, motherland and fellow people since his childhood.

Kim Il Sung's affection for the people was also characterized by his view of valuing them most in the world and giving priority to them above anything else.

The Juche idea he authored is an ideology of respect and love for humans, which puts forward man as the most dignified and valuable being in the world and regards the masses of the people as the most intelligent and powerful motive force of history. Its core is worship of them.

The masses of the people aspire not only to affection between family members but also to social ethics with which all members of society treat, respect and care for one another as human beings of equal personality and dignity.

Kim Il Sung devoted his life to creating a beautiful flower garden of human love. Regarding the respect for human personality and dignity as the foremost love, he put forward the love for humans and respect for the masses of the people as a banner of the revolution.

He regarded the people as his god. He viewed them as an object of his lifelong worship, an object to be upheld and supported.

The story of his bonds of friendship with Tojong Pak In Jin and his wife gives an insight into the height and value of true worship that a man can cherish.

One of the patriots produced by the anti-Japanese revolution, Pak In Jin achieved great exploits on the road of national salvation in alliance with communism.

Founded in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, Chondoism is a religion indigenous to the Korean nation, which is based on the systematization of Tonghak (Eastern Learning).

After joining the Chondoist faith, Pak held several religious posts of different levels and in 1932 he became *Tojong* (title of the leader of a regional community of Chondoism). At that time, Chondoism had 29 regional communities across Korea. The community under his charge was the biggest one that covered the Phungsan, Samsu and Kapsan areas in Korea and the Changbai area in China, which indicates that he was a man of considerable eminence in the Chondoist hierarchy.

During the March First Popular Uprising in 1919, he organized an anti-Japanese demonstration of over 1 000 people in Phungsan and fought bravely in the vanguard. Although he was wounded by gunshot and arrested, he firmly maintained his religious belief and will of resistance despite great sufferings in the Sodaemun Prison.

Later he lived in a remote mountain village assisting the Independence Army and propagating the Chondoist faith. It was when Kim Il Sung founded the Association for the Restoration of the Fatherland (ARF) on May 5, 1936 and strived to expand the all-Korea anti-Japanese national united front that he came into contact with a political operative of Kim Il Sung's anti-Japanese guerrilla army.

He expressed his sympathy with the *Inaugural Declaration and Ten-Point Programme* of the ARF, and showed his positive views on them at a meeting with a representative of the Korean People's Revolutionary Army. Early in the winter of 1936 he visited a secret camp of the army to meet Commander Kim Il Sung.

Kim Il Sung exchanged opinions with him on various issues such as the situations at home and abroad, the realities of the national movement and the course of the development of the anti-Japanese armed struggle. Their talks lasted for several days.

During a conversation with him one day, Kim Il Sung, noticing that it was time for the guest to hold a ritual—offering clean water to the founder of the religion—told his orderly to fetch a bowlful of clear water.

The latter declined to hold the ritual, saying he could not do it before Kim Il Sung.

However, Kim Il Sung urged him, saying that he, who was

uncommonly pious, was not allowed to neglect the daily divine ritual even once.

Pak could not decline any more. He chanted a litany and drank a drought of the water. Then he said, “I would like to ask you one thing, General. Do you worship anything, like we believe in heaven? If you do any, what is it?”

Heaven, the most sacred object of worship in Chondoism, indicates the entity which they believe is the origin of the world and the source of all things. It was common sense that no communist would worship something as the religionists did. Pak also knew this.

However, Kim Il Sung took his question as an expression of the religionist’s trust in him, and said: Of course, there is something I believe in like God; that is the people; I worship the people as I would do heaven, and respect them as if they were God. My God is none other than the people. Only the masses are omniscient, omnipotent and almighty on the earth; therefore, I regard “The people are my God” as my lifetime motto.

Pak remarked confidently that his visit to Mt Paektu had been rewarded, and that he had learned what and where was the true heaven.

“The people are my God”—this unique approach is the epitome of Kim Il Sung’s ennobling view on the people, which elevates their might and value to the highest level.

The people had been mistreated for a long time. But Kim Il Sung

regarded them as his God. What, then, was his spiritual mainstay in doing so? It was none other than his absolute trust in the limitless power that would be demonstrated by the awakened and united masses of the people. Even though everything in the world has its limit, the power of the people has none and, once mobilized, can make everything possible and even override heaven—this was his view on the might of the masses.

Being an invalid due to extreme torture by the Japanese police, Pak In Jin was released on parole in the spring of 1939. On his deathbed, he told his wife to go to see General Kim Il Sung with his children when Korea became liberated. Then he told his favourite disciple, “As long as General Kim is in good health and the revolutionary army is going strong in Mt Paektu, our white-clad Koreans will meet the dawn without fail. You will live in a country, governed by Heaven. I have a clear vision of that day.”

In the summer of 1992 Kim Il Sung was told that Pak’s wife, now aged over 90, was still alive. So pleased at the news, he sent for her, saying that she should be carried on someone’s back if she had difficulty in walking.

The old widow always called Kim Il Sung Heaven with respect. He dissuaded her from doing so but she insisted, saying, “I saw you, Heaven, in my dreams.” The sacred history of his creating beautiful flower garden of human love left indelible imprints in the hearts of the

Korean people. They still sing the praises of the great father as their benefactor, who regarded the voice of the people as the voice of God and the masses of the people as the omniscient and omnipotent beings.

### **Focus of Thinking and Activities**

All of Kim Il Sung's thinking and activities were oriented to the affection for the people, and never deviated from it. They started with this affection and developed, driven by it.

One day in the 1990s, while taking a stroll in the garden, he saw a peculiar breed of chicken. It was a pet chicken, called "hairy-legged," provided by the officials who, worried about his excessive load of work, wanted him to have a pleasant time even for a moment during his stroll.

He watched the chicken with curiosity for a while before asking an official how many eggs it could lay a year.

The official answered about 80.

Kim Il Sung looked back at him with a disappointed look on his face.

"An ordinary hen lays 200 to 250 eggs a year. If this hen lays 80, what's its use?"

"She is not for obtaining meat or eggs but for petting, Comrade

President. Doesn't it look cute and beautiful?"

Kim Il Sung said that a hen, however good-looking, was of no use if she could not lay many eggs and he would come to enjoy a hen every day if she could lay many eggs, however ugly she might look, and continued: I wish we had a breed of hen that can lay about 400 eggs a year; then our people will be provided with more eggs.

However splendid and uncommon something may be, it means nothing to me if it offers no substantial benefit to the people—this was his criterion of judgement of anything.

At the forefront of his affection for the people were always the children, whom he viewed as the king of the country. His love for the children was beyond comparison, and he did everything he could for them.

Although it is well known to the world that he greeted New Year's Days with children, few people would know that a New Year gathering once took place in the Okryu Restaurant.

In the run-up to the New Year 1961, a problem troubled him. It was about the venue for the New Year gathering of children. He thought the Taedongmun Cinema that had been used as the place was now not suitable in light of the scale and number of participants in the gathering.

During a consultation with the officials, he recommended the Okryu Restaurant, which was nearing inauguration.

The officials were quite surprised. It was newly built and,

furthermore, was reserved for a state banquet.

An official told him about it frankly.

Kim Il Sung replied: The fact that it is brand-new makes it a better choice; we should have a proper viewpoint and attitude towards the children; even if a state banquet is held in another building, it should be open to the children first so that they could sing and dance to their heart's content.

So the restaurant planned to be used for a state banquet was chosen as the venue for children's gathering for the New Year 1961.

On April 8, 1973, when he visited the newly-built Pyongyang Indoor Stadium, he said: What else is such a large building for, except children's New Year gathering? if the VIP stall is removed, the building can accommodate more Pyongyang citizens; as the cadres are not so many, their seats could be installed in a corner on a small scale; then it will make enough space for a larger-scale gathering of children.

Thanks to his love for the children, a prime site in the central part of the capital city was chosen for the Pyongyang Students and Children's Palace, and the palace could be built splendidly despite the difficult situation, in which the country had to simultaneously push ahead with the building of the economy and defence capability.

On April 15, 1992, at the banquet the government of the DPRK arranged in celebration of the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his birth, Kim Il Sung delivered a speech. He said:

“I embarked on the path of revolution with a determination to dedicate myself to the country and my fellow people, and ever since my love for the people has at all times been uppermost in my mind.”

From his early years he considered the revolution itself to be love for people.

He had one of his most heart-rending experiences in the days of the anti-Japanese armed struggle, when he saw members of the Children’s Corps in the Maanshan Secret Camp in a terrible state of misery; the children were suspected of being involved in “Minsaengdan” (a spy organization formed in February 1932 by the Japanese imperialists to destroy the anti-Japanese revolutionary ranks of Korea from within).

Suppressing his harrowing pain in his heart, he said in a husky voice to the officers in charge of the camp’s supply work: Today I cannot help thinking about the view of value of the revolutionaries; why did we start the revolution and why are we still carrying on the revolution overcoming all hardships? we embarked on the road of the revolution, not because we wanted to destroy something, but because we loved the people; we have risen up in revolt against the hateful world so as to free the people from all sorts of injustice and evil customs, champion what are humane and defend all the wealth and beauty created by mankind.

From this viewpoint, he waged an uncompromising struggle against even the smallest practice of infringing on the people's interests.

During his trips for on-site guidance, he felt most pleased when he met officials who were striving to provide the people with better living conditions. However, he would never overlook but give a good dressing-down to those officials who did not work as they should but rode roughshod over the people.

His ardent affection for the people found its most conspicuous expression in his warm care for their living and meticulous guidance for improving its standards.

He was the father of a large family—a country—who strived to provide all its members with enough foods, clothes and houses.

When he was reported on the shortage of food for the people, he worried most. As he thought that the problem of clothing could wait but food shortage was so pressing, he could not make even the slightest concession or compromise when a case was related with the problem of food for the people. When he was reported that the people were suffering from a food shortage, he could not sleep at night.

There are many other stories about his great affection for the people. His life was truly that of selfless devoted efforts for the good of the people.

## Invariable Trust

Kim Il Sung's affection for the people was ardent and unshakable as it was based on his invariable trust in them.

This trust was the starting point of the affection for the people, which was one of his endowed qualities, its most important content and a cornerstone, on which he glorified the history of the Korean revolution as that of affection for the people.

He started the revolution on the strength of trust in the people, and led it driven by the trust.

His was a life of trust in his fellow people and comrades; this trust was a powerful driving force of the revolution and his life-long philosophy. The philosophy of trust was absolute and steadfast as it correctly reflected the profound truth of revolutionary struggle and human life.

The philosophy dates back to the early days of the anti-Japanese revolution, when he declared a war against the imperialist power virtually bare-handed; there was no telling whether he would emerge victorious, and he had no material assets to rely on.

The asset, if any, was his trust in the people which, he believed, would become his spiritual mainstay; the trust in the boundless loyalty

and obligation of his revolutionary comrades and the inexhaustible wisdom, strength and patriotic enthusiasm of the masses was the one and only motive force for carrying out the revolution.

This trust gave birth to innumerable revolutionary fighters, known and unknown, and gave full play to their incomparable self-sacrificing and fighting spirit in the struggle for the motherland and the revolution, the Party and the people.

Even those who unintentionally got involved in the anti-revolutionary activities or acted as stooges of the enemy were so impressed by his trust that they chose to side with the revolutionary forces.

There is a story, titled, *A Weasel Hunter*, in the seventh volume of his memoirs *With the Century*.

In 1937, when the Korean People's Revolutionary Army was conducting military and political training at the Matanggou Secret Camp, the weasel hunter who had been helping the guerrillas turned his coat lured by the Japanese imperialists. Although he had showed unusual signs several times, neither Kim Il Sung nor his men expressed their suspicion. Rather, they treated him with hospitality out of sympathy for his making a hand-to-mouth existence by weasel hunting.

The rules of the secret camp stated that the camp was off-limit to civilians, but he was given a tour of it, allowed to attend the recreation parties, political lectures and debates and served with boiled millet.

The hunter was deeply moved by their absolute trust in and warm hospitality to him.

One day, when Kim Il Sung called him to have a talk, he revealed his identity of his own accord and confessed that he was given a mission to harm the Headquarters, showing the axe he had buried under a white birch.

He also told frankly that he had not voluntarily confessed his mission but concealed the axe despite their trust and hospitality, and that he had not informed the Headquarters that the man for whom he acted as a liaison with the guerrillas was an agent of the enemy.

In the memoirs, Kim Il Sung recalled that, had he not confessed, the Headquarters and the unit would have been destroyed and thanks to the trust placed in him, his stained heart could regain the purity of his human conscience.

Similar cases were recorded several times in his revolutionary career. In each case, it was his trust in the people that turned unfavourable conditions into favourable ones and misfortunes into blessings. It was his conviction that distrust seldom brings benefit whereas trust surely does.

His was genuine trust in his revolutionary comrades, the fellow people and service personnel.

He exerted himself all his life to make not any individual man or group the powerful motive force of history and the independent masters

of their own destiny, but the workers, peasants, working intellectuals, service personnel and all other people of the country.

Few people would know the reason why a long period of two years passed until a practical ceasefire was concluded since the issue of ceasefire was brought up for discussion for the first time during the Fatherland Liberation War.

The US imperialists' wild ambition of occupying Korea as a whole within three days after they started the Korean war, was completely frustrated.

Driven into a tight corner due to the struggle of the Korean People's Army and other Korean people, the US proposed ceasefire negotiations one year after the start of the war.

The war, however, lasted for two more years. Of course, this was due to various reasons including the US imperialists' sinister intention to try to launch a "new offensive" while stalling for time behind the curtain of ceasefire negotiations. But one of the main reasons was the issue of POWs.

Kim Il Sung held that their proposal for ceasefire negotiations was as good as their surrender. He, therefore, instructed that his country put forward its terms in concluding the ceasefire. One of the main problems that should be solved without fail was that of POWs.

From the day when concluding the ceasefire was becoming a practical possibility, he did everything he could to have the POWs repatriated.

There are prisoners in any war. It is a system acknowledged by international law that POWs should be treated on the principle of humanitarianism, and cannot be maltreated, tortured, murdered or made objects of experiment, but should be repatriated without condition.

During the Korean war, however, the US imperialists viciously committed unethical atrocities against POWs, torturing and threatening them in an attempt to convert them or make them turn their back to the DPRK.

More grieved over this than anyone else, Kim Il Sung made painstaking efforts to bring back all the prisoners. He considered the issue of exchange of POWs to be something that could not be conceded at all.

To solve this issue, he phoned the senior delegate of the KPA to the Military Armistice Commission over 100 times. Later, recalling that time, he said that his country had fought the US imperialists over the issue for more than a year, and that but for the issue of exchange of POWs, the armistice agreement might have been concluded sooner.

One month was followed by another and the war went on, destroying the land of his country more severely and inflicting more sufferings upon its people. Still, he exerted himself to bring back the POWs while overcoming all pains and troubles. This was based on his trust.

It was not merely his moral obligation as the Supreme Commander who had to value his soldiers, but his purely human trust in them and

his firm fatherly trust in the sons of the country that made him so much concerned about the matter of the issue. Later, recalling the days when he had striven to solve the matter, he said he must have never brought them back if he had had no trust in them.

He was wont to say that a man who is inclined to suspect people without believing in them is cut out for living alone on an island, and would correct such a tendency in time whenever it was evident among officials.

During the Fatherland Liberation War, an officer of the KPA, after carrying out his task of inspecting a division, reported to Kim Il Sung that 85% of the division's soldiers were undesirable elements.

Kim Il Sung severely criticized him, saying that what was dangerous was not the division but his behaviour.

When officials made the mistakes of treating the people with chequered family backgrounds in a bigoted manner, he immediately made an issue of the mistakes and corrected them.

Kim Il Sung's trust in the people did not know discrimination; his indiscriminate trust in them gave birth to benevolent politics unprecedented in history, and the great reality of single-hearted unity on this land.

The trust was a genuine one with no selfishness. He always stressed: Sham can have no place in trust in the people.

His trust in man was so genuine that he would resolutely take part in

a battle to defend the people even at the risk of his life.

He was explicit in expressing his trust in the people; whenever he met an old comrade-in-arms of his or an ordinary worker or farmer, he would say that he invariably had firm trust in them.

Those who earned his trust regarded the trust as their lifeline and worked with all devotion so as not to betray it until the last moments of their life.

During the Fatherland Liberation War, he foresaw victory in the war and decided to send many technicians abroad to train them as technical personnel needed for postwar reconstruction.

Some narrow-minded officials, however, picked a quarrel with the origins and backgrounds of some of those to be sent.

Kim Il Sung said to them: In the past the sons and daughters of our workers and peasants were too poor to go to school and only the sons and daughters of rich families received some education; if we question our intellectuals, they will all be problematic in one way or another; I believe that those on the list will not engage in espionage abroad and will not cause us any harm after returning home; it would be advisable to send their list to the organs of the foreign countries concerned with a letter saying that I can vouch for them.

His such warm love and trust ushered in a great history in the DPRK, in which the leader and his people share the same destiny, united by the ties of kinship.

### **Boundless Humanity**

Genuine affection for people means looking after and helping them with the best of one's mind, ability and strength. Love is not merely an expression of feeling. It is one's true ardent devotion to and active self-sacrifice for those one respects and trusts.

Kim Il Sung treated the people with boundless warm humanity and dedicated his life to caring for them.

His warm humanity was an important factor in enabling him to possess truest human love.

He approached, cared for and led the people always with warm humanity.

The head of state is the highest official position of the country. Kim Il Sung, however, took care of and led the people with affection and humanity instead of orders and directives.

With such humanity that touched the hearts of all people, he, in wartime, reared a war orphan.

His humanity was so warm that both children and adults felt relieved of all worries when they were in his embrace.

As for outstanding military experts or great leaders of revolution, people, throughout history, imagined their stern characters first. It is

commonplace to think that they are too far from being benevolent.

US President Roosevelt's personal envoy, who met Stalin in Moscow in December 1941, said about Stalin's distinctive features as follows: He made not a single of unnecessary gesture or forced facial expression; it seemed that I was talking to an admirably temperate and reasonable machine.

These comments can be regarded as those about the inimitable personality of Stalin, who would make a stern and overbearing expression in treating people.

People have already regarded humanity as the most excellent virtue that beautifies human society.

Kim Il Sung's humanity, however, was like a huge sea gripping the hearts of all people.

The bright smiles were a concentrated expression of his distinctive humanity. His beaming image that touched the hearts of all people was the invariable image throughout his life of over 80 years.

His face always wore a bright smile at any time and in any place. Whoever he met and had a talk with on a tour of field guidance, be they workers, farmers, children, service personnel or officials, he always wore a bright smile. He treated with a generous smile even those who were at a loss what to do before him as they had made mistakes that worried him, and kindly explained their mistakes to them. During an official meeting or talk or on the platform during functions held to

celebrate national anniversaries, he always wore a bright smile.

The sunny smile he wore made the people comfortable and pleasant. As he was possessed of such distinctive humanity, he always wore such bright smile even though he had to brave all manner of historical trials and difficulties and endure pain with a superhuman will.

The first US statesman to visit Pyongyang and meet him after the Korean war was the chairman of the Asia and Pacific Subcommittee of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the House of Representatives.

The record of their talk was made public 20 years after their meeting. At a press conference held in 1980 after the document was made public, the US statesman, having been asked to tell about his impressions of the meeting, said: I had a talk with President Kim Il Sung for about four hours; he was very exceptional and gentle and always smiling while talking; he impressed me as a nice man.

His words can be said to be his acknowledgement of the remarkable personality of the President who unceremoniously and generously treated foreigners as well as his beloved people.

Even though he was well aware of the true colours of those who pretended allegiance before him while doing the opposite behind the scene, he seldom got angry with them or censured them but generously treated them with a smile, thus giving them opportunities to confess or mend their faults of their own accord.

He was a ferocious tiger to the enemy, but he always treated the

people with a sunny smile on his face.

One day after Korea's liberation from the Japanese military occupation Hong Myong Hui, who was renowned as a pride of the nation in the days when all Koreans were writhing in rancour and sorrow as colonial slaves, was asked by his son what General Kim Il Sung was like and if they could entrust their family's destiny to him. Hong Myong Hui said he had been charmed by the General's bright smile.

In June 1984, when Kim Il Sung was visiting the former Yugoslavia, a photographer of the country failed to take a photo of him stepping off the train with a bright smile on his face. The photographer said about his failure as follows:

“Comrade Kim Il Sung's smile was a benevolent fascinating smile that charms people. The smile is an expression of his great generosity and broadmindedness, strong influence and noble humanity. No photographer in the world will be able to reproduce a perfect photo of such a smile as it is.”

The Yugoslavian was so much attracted by Kim Il Sung's bright smile in a moment that he forgot even his duty as a photographer. But he could not be blamed for it.

In July 1994, the Korean people wailed beating their chests as they bid their last farewell to him; as they looked at the portrait of their beaming leader, carried by a car before the hearse, they further yearned

for the great father who had taken so warm care of them.

A smile is just the most usual and definite expression of such feelings as joy and satisfaction one experiences in life. In this sense, it can be said to be the frankest expression of his feelings.

The image of Kim Il Sung remembered by any of the Korean people is the one of the father smiling brightly with great satisfaction or joy.

But few people in the world would know his innermost thoughts.

In fact he did not live for over 80 years only with satisfaction and joy. More easily moved to tears than smiling, he lived with the pain of greater loss than anybody else. He experienced all possible sufferings, and shed many tears with the greatest pain that no one else experienced. Few days passed for him without shedding tears inwardly.

He was an ever-victorious, iron-willed brilliant commander and outstanding veteran statesman, but he lived with a greater pain in his mind than anyone else, and wept inwardly more frequently than he smiled. This was because of his love for others and his enormous humanity.

Of man's various thoughts and feelings, whereas human feeling is the most genuine and warmest, tears of sincerity are one of the frankest expressions of the human feeling.

Kim Il Sung, who was tender-hearted and easily moved to tears, had the unique view that one can become a genuine hero only when they can be moved to tears.

During his talk with senior officials of the Party, the state and the army on January 2, 1988 and on June 8 and November 6, 1989, he said: It is good that a man is moved to tears frequently; a cold-hearted man cannot shed even a single drop of tear even if he is forced to do so; a hero who can be moved to tears is a genuine hero.

He shed many tears all his life because of his love for the people and his friendship with his revolutionary comrades. It was when he lost his beloved revolutionary comrades that he shed tears most.

Whenever he received sad news of the death of his comrades, he could not repress the tears of sorrow, and the ensuing injury in his mind never healed.

During the anti-Japanese war, many of his comrades died without living to see the day of their country's liberation from the Japanese military occupation. Feeling so painful, he would write funeral addresses or bury the martyrs in copious tears; once, when he received the report that an inspector from the Comintern he had gotten acquainted with merely for ten days was killed by the enemy, he mourned the deceased in tears in his room with the door closed all day long. In post-liberation days, too, he lost his revolutionary comrades including Kim Chaek, An Kil and Pak Tal, and patriotic men including Ho Hon and Hong Myong Hui; each time he would shed tears in severe pain of loss no one else could imagine.

Not only when he lost officials but also when he heard the report

that an ordinary person he had known died, he was grief-stricken.

During wartime, his chauffeur suddenly died of heart failure at the wheel. Shedding tears of sorrow, Kim Il Sung arranged the funeral and selected the site where his remains were to be buried. That day he shed tears of sorrow without having a meal all day long.

When he inquired into the result of a battle with the enemy, he would also inquire into the number of the soldiers fallen in the battle, regarding this as an important criterion for judging the victory or defeat in the battle.

During the Fatherland Liberation War, some commanding officers employed “mobile warfare” and the like that were not suited to the specific conditions of Korea, against the Workers’ Party of Korea’s policy of tunnel warfare.

Kim Il Sung sternly reproached them for having sacrificed not a few soldiers, and resolutely said: If the loss of our forces in a battle with the enemy is big, it is not a victorious battle for us; the bourgeois military experts regard the masses of soldiers merely as means of war and toast to their victory regardless of massive sacrifice; we reject their way of thinking.

To look back upon the world history of war, there were examples of giving cheers with a flag of victory put up on heaps of dead bodies. In its attack on Lushun (Port Arthur) in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century Japan enlisted a force 130 000 strong to attack the port defended by 51 000

soldiers, and occupied it in seven months, sustaining more than 110 000 casualties; it still declared it a great victory. During the Second World War, the US and Britain lost over 122 000 troops during the Normandy invasion, and yet gave wide publicity to it, saying it was a “model” of modern landing operations. US troops suffered serious casualties in the operations to land on Iwo Jima of Japan, an island which is only 20.3 square kilometres in area; yet MacArthur was promoted to five-star general. At the time, there were only a few such generals in the US forces.

During the anti-Japanese armed struggle, Kim Il Sung, through adroit guerrilla tactics, would lead battles to victory, incurring a loss of few lives, but when even a guerrilla fell, he would shed copious tears. During the Fatherland Liberation War, too, he refused to recognize the victory of any battle if it caused a loss of many lives.

His human feeling was so genuine and firm that it never changed even with the passage of time.

After Korea’s liberation from the Japanese military occupation, Jo Ki Chon, the poet who wrote the long epic *Mt Paektu*, visited General Kim Il Sung.

Kim Il Sung was the first one to listen to the poem Jo recited.

The epic has many parts touching people’s heartstrings, and one of the parts impressed Kim Il Sung most deeply. It was the part, which portrays the sorrow the hero feels after burying Yong Nam, his favourite

boy, who was shot to death by the enemy. The part reads as follows:

...

*You woodcutter, who works these mighty cliffs,*

*Cut carefully the trunks of these great trees.*

*Who can tell?*

*Here in the wood they may watch over the souls*

*Of warriors who died to save their country.*

*You traveller upon these grandiose peaks,*

*Touch not the rocks that lie along the road—*

*Beneath them—who can tell?—There yet may lie*

*The skeletons of warriors who died to save their people.*

Listening to the part, Kim Il Sung could not but shed tears as he was reminded of his fallen comrades-in-arms, known and unknown, for whom he had failed to set up gravestones and bury properly.

Genuine human feeling knows no barrier.

It was not merely Korean revolutionaries and ordinary Koreans who followed and supported Kim Il Sung, attracted by his ennobling human feeling.

During the anti-Japanese war, he was revered and followed by diehard nationalists, conscientious native capitalists, patriotic landlords and the upper strata of the religious circles though he was merely in his twenties. And in post-liberation days, the people who had assumed an air of importance here and there bowed their heads to the human

feeling of generous Kim Il Sung. Referring to the fact that former US President Carter said that he was quite impressed by President Kim Il Sung and that he respected him as a political leader, a senior research fellow of an international peace foundation of the United States said: If I have to appraise President Kim Il Sung, I will say he is a man of warm human feeling.

Not only the Korean people but also other peoples in the world respected Kim Il Sung for, before being a man of outstanding ideology and leadership, he was a man with extraordinary human feeling that touched the heartstrings of all people. He attracted people by dint of his human feeling before captivating them with his ideology and moving them by his leadership. His such noble charms made all those attracted by him gather around him and made them harmonious and united.

The Korean people and the progressive peoples in the world do not forget him, a man who smiled and shed tears out of human feeling and took tender and warm care of them.

### **Praise by the People—*Fatherly Leader***

Kim Il Sung lived a very simple life.

He never allowed others to say in praise of himself. He thought he was only a servant of the people, a son of the people.

Throughout his life, however, he did not mind being called fatherly leader by the people.

In July 1985, when he was having a talk with a delegation of the Left Party-Communists of Sweden, he said: Our officials call me father; I have no objection to their addressing me in this way.

That day he explained in detail the successes and experience of the revolution and construction in the DPRK.

While talking about the experience gained in solving the problem of native cadres, he said: All the officials of the Party and state present here were brought up systematically by me; so they call me father; I have no objection to their addressing me in this way; I tell our officials that they should obey their father's advice and be loyal subjects of the country and the people as well as steadfast revolutionaries.

*Father*, this was an appellation, which he most willingly accepted and he was most proud of, among the many appellations and honorific titles given him by his revolutionary comrades and people since the early days of his revolutionary activities.

Although he was the President of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea and received many honorific titles from abroad, he was more proud of being called fatherly leader.

The concept of the word *father* had an entirely new meaning in the

DPRK. It reflected the blood ties between the leader and the people.

All the Korean people were and are still wont to call Kim Il Sung fatherly leader.

There is a reason why the officials and people praised him fatherly leader, and he did not refuse to be called so.

The appellation was an expression of the feelings of the people, who lived under his paternal care, and it was Kim Il Sung's lifelong wish to live as such for them.

Everyone has his or her father and mother who brought them up.

But the father the Korean people unanimously upheld and followed sincerely was the great Kim Il Sung.

For them, Kim Il Sung was their benevolent and dependable father and considerate and meticulous mother before being the leader of the Party and state.

His affection for them was boundlessly deep and wide far beyond that of their own parents.

He was a shield defending their safety and an artist of their happiness.

Rain or shine, he visited factories, farms and military units to take care of the living of the people and service personnel with parental affection.

Throughout his life, he devoted his all for solving the problem of food, clothing and housing of the people.

He grew up experiencing the sufferings of a ruined nation in distress.

He was born in a typical Korean rural family that was poor and living a hard life.

He went hungry like anybody else, and grew up without wearing proper clothes and shoes.

Whenever he felt like eating pork he wished he had a sore throat for pork was a medicine for sore throat; he would walk barefooted holding in his hand the shoes, which he had managed to get, on his way to and from school and wore them only at school.

His old home in Mangyongdae was actually a grave-keeper's house, and a misshapen jar and other jars, some dishes and farm implements were all his large family owned.

His family members would eat unhulled millet porridge, and could not own a clock which they so earnestly wanted to have until the liberation of the country. It was one of the poor families in Korea in the days of colonial rule.

He knew what hunger was and how miserable it was to go outside without proper clothing and shoes. He also experienced how sad it was when he could not see the doctor for medical treatment and could not go to school.

He did not forget even a moment throughout his 80 years of life the sufferings he had experienced as a member of a ruined nation.

This is why he set it as an important goal of socialism to provide the people with white rice and proper clothing and housing, and

devoted his all to achieving the goal.

In Korea boiled white rice was called king's rice from olden times for it was supposed to be eaten only by kings.

Later it was called royal rice in the period of the feudal Joseon dynasty for it was supposed to be eaten only by the royal family.

The commoners could not afford to put boiled white rice even on the table of rituals held in memory of their ancestors, so they would put boiled corn or other cereals at the bottom of a bowl and cover it with a few spoonfuls of white rice.

Kim Il Sung did his best in order not to make his people and the coming generations experience the heart-breaking feelings of not being able to afford white rice.

His contemplation and effort to make his people eat to their fill continued throughout his entire life.

With an understanding of his feelings, a foreign head of state presented him with materials for the people's living, instead of a congratulatory message or a valuable gift on his birth anniversary.

On the eve of Kim Il Sung's 40<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary in 1952, when the gunfire of the Fatherland Liberation War was sounding, officials were worried how to celebrate the day in the difficult situation.

At 23 hours, an official from the Soviet Embassy came and informed him of the content of a telegram from Stalin.

The telegram read:

Comrade Kim Il Sung

Pyongyang

I have learned that cereals are needed for the Korean people. We have kept 50 000 tons of wheat flour in store in Siberia. We can send this wheat flour to the Korean people as a present. I want you to inform us whether you approve or not by telegram. According to your opinion we will immediately send you wheat flour.

With comradely greetings,

Joseph Stalin

April 14, 1952

Kim Il Sung, with a happy look on his face, said: The wheat flour is much better than messages of congratulations for my birthday.

At that time the food situation was very difficult.

The news that wheat flour for the service personnel and people would come made him very excited.

Later when he met the Korean officials, Stalin said: At that time I thought Comrade Kim Il Sung would feel happy to receive wheat flour instead of a message of congratulation, so I saw to it that the wheat flour arrived in Korea on April 15.

Kim Il Sung was so much concerned about how to make his people eat proper foods that even in the days of the war he personally raised 300 chickens and 1 000 rainbow trouts and cultivated various kinds of vegetables near the Supreme Headquarters, drawing up the bright

future of poultry and stock breeding and vegetable farming.

He saw to it that breeding poultry was brought from abroad by plane during the war as he thought it would be necessary to produce meat and eggs after the war.

The Kwangpho Duck Farm in Jongphyong County, South Hamgyong Province, is one of them.

With an ardent desire to make the people have enough food, Kim Il Sung visited farms even in the last days of his life with a concern about agricultural production.

He was so concerned about the food problem of the people that one day he stopped the children walking by, opened their lunch boxes and smiled to see boiled white rice in them.

He once said he so much wanted to make the people eat to their fill that he would rather become an advisor to farming in the country instead of the head of state.

He even postponed the meeting with a foreign delegation to guide poultry production.

On May 6, 1993, Kim Il Sung was very happy to hear the report from an official who had been to the Sopho Chicken Farm.

The report was that 56 rainworms, which he had sent to that farm in June 1978, had been propagated and were growing well.

He was so excited that the next day he went to the farm and, looking at a box of rainworms taken out of the shed, asked for a trowel.

As he wanted to see the rainworms in the earth, an official quickly dug the box here and there with a trowel. Every time he moved the trowel, the red rainworms showed up in groups.

“Good. Very good, indeed,” he said with a broad smile on his face. He then turned to the rainworm shed.

The officials were at a loss what to do as the air inside the shed was very bad; the rainworms were growing in the mixture of cornstalks and the excrement of chickens and cows.

An official suggested that he should not go inside.

Kim Il Sung asked him whether it was because the smell inside was bad.

The official said yes.

Kim Il Sung said: I do not mind the bad smell; it’s of no use to stand on the yard of the chicken farm without entering the shed; I am OK; let’s go in.

No wonder the smell of rotten manure filled the shed.

But Kim Il Sung entered it, asking an official to bring a trowel and let them dig the earth.

He looked very pleased to see the rainworms swarming in groups.

He then looked round the chicken house with bad smell, inquired into the growth and egg laying by chickens and, postponing the scheduled meeting with a foreign delegation, convened a conference of officials in the poultry production sector in a simple office of the farm.

Bad weather, rough road, bad condition of the place he was to look round and even extreme fatigue or missing meals were not a problem for him.

What he was concerned all his life was how to make his people eat well.

His efforts to solve the problem of food of the people left imprints at factories and farms, towns and countryside, and schools and military units.

When he visited factories, he would drop in at the kitchen of the workers' hostels before inquiring into their production, and when he visited a farm, he would open the rice jar and cupboard in the kitchen of a farmer's house to learn about their living conditions. This habit never changed wherever he visited. Of the many photos of his visits to the places where people worked and lived, the number of photos of him in the mess halls of factories and kitchens of houses is no less than that of the photos of him making speeches or talking to the people.

Food for the people was not the only concern for him.

He was also concerned about clothing, shoes and other daily necessities of the people.

During the difficult days of the anti-Japanese armed struggle, he was concerned about the shoes for the children in the guerrilla bases. After the liberation of the country, when he heard from a girl soldier that she had received a letter from her younger brother that read that there

was a shortage of shoes in her native village, he took it as a demand of the masses, and broached it to a meeting of the Political Committee of the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea to solve the problem.

Whenever he saw children not wearing proper clothes on his way for on-site guidance, he would stop his car and find out what was wrong and take measures.

He saw to it that all the children of the country were provided with new clothes according to season.

The system of the state providing the children with clothes free of charge was conceived by him in the days of the anti-Japanese armed struggle.

On April 12, 1977, he visited the then Yonphung Senior Middle School to see the new school uniforms provided to the children and students across the country.

When he saw the students in new school uniforms, he said: They look gentler than me; there had been few happy days in my life of 60 years, but I feel the happiest today; this is the first day that I feel so happy.

When he heard at a meeting of officials in the economic sector, the last of its kind in his life, that all the children were provided with new clothes as he had instructed, he thanked the official concerned time and again.

He was such a great man that, when he visited the Ryongyon Shop in the then Anju County in June 1958, he asked whether the shop had trousers for the old women, telling the officials in charge of commercial affairs that they should take the standpoint of buyers, not just paying attention to selling goods.

And when he was studying the plans for cloth production of the country, he would calculate in his handbook the length of cloth to be supplied to each household and each person.

Even during the hard days of the Korean war, he personally went to a market, had a talk with a pancake seller and meat dealer to make inquiries into the living conditions of the people, and took measures for setting up underground markets.

He always had in mind food, salt, eggs, fish, soap, footwear, firewood and other indexes for the people's living.

Thanks to his ennobling affection for the people, free medical care and free education were enforced and improvement of the people's living standards became the supreme principle of the activities of the Party and the state.

People usually think physical training, diet and tonic are essential to their longevity.

For Kim Il Sung, however, the conditions for longevity were something which no one could ever imagine or meet.

He regarded the affluent life of the people as the most important

condition of his good health.

Every time the officials and people would wish him good health, he would say that he would live for one hundred years if the people lived in good houses, eating their fill and wearing good clothes.

Had he not had a taste of the astringent acorn jelly in the mountainous Changsong County and taught the local people in detail the way to be well off, they could not have eaten white rice.

And had he not concerned himself with the fresh corn on the cob and sweet potato for the people in urban areas, the scene of trucks carrying fruits, vegetables and sweet potatoes according to season in towns could not have been witnessed.

He was not only the supreme commander of the soldiers but also their fatherly leader.

He once put his hand inside the smelly padded shoes of a soldier to feel the thickness of the cotton; and the other time, when the war was at its height, he gave his fur cap and gloves to a soldier on sentry duty.

It was his ideal to turn the whole country into one large family.

In the struggle to realize this ideal, before being the head of state or General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea, he was the father, the head of the great family of the country.

As he had a special view on the younger generation, the view that the children are the kings and queens of the country, he would enjoy time with the children, singing and dancing with them.

Once when officials were worried about his busy schedule, he said: The time flies when I am with the children.

When he was with the children, he often postponed his next schedule.

In the early 1970s the Japanese newspaper *Yomiuri Shimbun* surprised the Japanese people by writing: The DPRK is the only country in the world, where all the children of the country call the head of state father; Marshal Kim Il Sung relieves the fatigue of one whole year by staying with the children on New Year's Day; the DPRK is the kingdom of the children, and it reflects the policy of the state.

This is what a journalist from the newspaper wrote after enjoying a children's New Year celebration during his visit to the country and seeing Kim Il Sung mingling with the children.

The journalist actually intended to take pictures of Kim Il Sung wearing a red tie the children presented to him, patting them on the cheeks, embracing them and playing games with them in a recreation room, and the children who were surrounding him wherever he went, calling him father. But he was so excited that he could not take any proper pictures.

The journalist saw him saying during the New Year performance, "Our children are excellent," "I feel relieved of my fatigue, pleasant and delightful when I'm with children," and calling for an

encore. He wrote an impromptu poem.

*Marshal Kim Il Sung greets the New Year*

*with the dear children*

*Children are not waiting for the Father Christmas*

*Marshal Kim Il Sung gives them presents*

*He brings a New Year of glory*

*He listens to the holiday songs of the children every year*

*Waves of the children surround him*

*Calling him father*

*He enjoys himself with the waves of the children*

He could not feel satisfied with the poem, so he added a note to it: Only those who personally met Marshal Kim Il Sung can realize his greatness, his modesty and the world of his affection; talented in writing or speaking they may be, those, who met him in person, would not be able to describe the personality and greatness of the DPRK leader enough.

His poem and note were not what he felt or found as a professional journalist.

It was the most common ethics of one big family and warm love between the parent and his children that anyone could witness in the DPRK.

Kim Il Sung spent even his birthdays and holidays in a modest way among the people.

When he saw officials trying to prepare a birthday party for him, he would say: Preparing a special meal or a party for my birthday on April 15 is not something that makes me happy; please do not bother yourselves with such a thing; just prepare an ordinary meal.

He would often give on-the-spot guidance in the countryside on his birthdays to discuss the ways of improving the people's living standards, and spend holidays on his way of on-the-spot guidance.

As they lived regarding him as their father, even the children as well as the adults shed bitter tears when he passed away.

Dr. Angel Castro, the then chairman of the National Liberation Front of Peru, who could not understand the ties between Kim Il Sung and his people, wrote in his memoirs:

The Korean people call President Kim Il Sung fatherly leader; when I visited the country for the first time, I could not bring myself to understand why the Koreans called their leader fatherly leader; now I myself willingly call him fatherly leader; I do not know any other better expression than that one.

A professor emeritus at Rikkyo University in Japan praised Kim Il Sung as the true father of human life, saying: I had long failed to find a place where true love of mankind is completely realized; however only in the DPRK the love of mankind is in full bloom; I could find the love of mankind in the DPRK, the love which I have longed for from my childhood; it was indeed a wonderful reality.

The Korean people will in the future, too, praise Kim Il Sung, who built a garden of human love with warm affection, as their dear fatherly leader for ever.

### **Human Love That Knew No Border**

Kim Il Sung established warm relations with many foreigners and bestowed affection on them throughout his life.

This was not because he led the revolution or state. For him, meeting people and leading them along the right track was not only part of politics but a very important undertaking.

He met countless foreigners throughout his life. For nearly 50 years since Korea's liberation from the Japanese military occupation, he met about 70 000 foreigners of various political and social strata, occupations and ages from 136 countries. This means he met about 1 400 a year, four daily, on average.

When he was leading the armed struggle against the Japanese imperialists in Manchuria, he fought with many Chinese people including revolutionaries and soldiers of the anti-Japanese allied army. And during the days when preparations for the final campaign were being made, he worked with the Soviet soldiers and revolutionaries in the International Allied Forces. This means that the number of

foreigners he worked with until Korea's liberation was also no small.

There are many renowned heads of state and lifelong diplomats in the world, but none of them worked with so many foreigners as Kim Il Sung.

During his days as the supreme leader of the WPK and DPRK he met over 400 heads of foreign countries in total, which accounts for one percent of the total number of the foreigners he met. This indicates that almost all the foreigners he met were ordinary people from various walks of life—politicians, journalists, pressmen, diplomats, men of religion, workers, farmers, soldiers, scholars, students and even children.

There is no diplomatic custom or international convention that stipulates that a head of state is duty-bound to meet ordinary foreigners from various social strata who do not represent a state, government or political party. Many foreign high-ups do not so much as poke their noses in diplomatic places unless they can gain some interest or raise their international profile. On the contrary, they usually avoid meeting foreigners on purpose trying to emphasize their dignity and importance.

Kim Il Sung, however, was different from such average state or party leaders.

Despite his tight schedule, he managed to meet foreigners who wanted to see him. Sometimes, when some foreigners came to the DPRK to meet him, he made time for them although he was very busy

with on-site guidance in local areas.

Every one, if he had some political understanding, knew how high prestige Kim Il Sung enjoyed and how heavy burden he shouldered. Notwithstanding this, he would meet all the foreigners who wanted to see him and have unceremonious, friendly talks with them.

His charisma was something different from the worldly diplomatic skills familiar to the people around the world. There was no trace of selfishness or ostentation in it. It was a noble expression of human love and boundless respect for and trust in independent man.

His human love was based firmly on his magnanimity and generosity, with which he regarded as his friends all the foreigners who supported the cause of the Korean people and aspired after independence. Herein lay his unexcelled humanly charm and attraction.

He often used the word *friendship* when he mentioned his inseparable relations with foreigners. This shows that he did not regard his relations with foreigners as mere political, diplomatic or businesslike relations, but as friendship.

When he came to know that a foreign scholar of his acquaintance was worried because he had no child, he sent him *sinsollo* and insam soup, Korea's traditional health tonics. When a resistance fighter of a foreign country became president of his country, he was so pleased that he presented him with a gold watch inscribed with his autographed name and quality cloth for his suit. And when King Norodom Sihanouk

of Cambodia lost power in a political upheaval, he did not deviate from his former friendly relations but treated him with more hospitality, giving him encouragement and unstinted help to restore his country.

He bestowed benevolence on the bereaved family of Takeo Takagi, former chief director of the Japan-Korea Cultural Exchange Association. After meeting Kim Il Sung, his son said about his boundless human love: “President Kim Il Sung received us with that great personality, about which we had often heard from my father. We could easily feel that he is very friendly and magnanimous. Indeed, he is the benevolent father who takes warm care of us all.”

Just as everything on earth is attracted to the sun, so is man to sincere affection. It was because Kim Il Sung approached foreigners with magnanimous and unselfish mind that they respected, trusted and followed him with sincere heart. Some of them called him elder brother, father or grandfather.

Even Stalin of the former Soviet Union, Mao Zedong of China and Tito of former Yugoslavia, who had a strong sense of self-respect, esteemed and trusted Kim Il Sung calling him a great revolutionary and great man.

In an article a foreigner, who had met Kim Il Sung twice, answered those who asked him about his impression of him that he was such a great man whom others would be reluctant to part from and be willing to follow once they met him. He continued to say:

“What makes one a genuine man is his human love based on independence and it can be called the aroma of his personality. Just as bees and butterflies flock to flowers attracted by their fragrance, people follow and rally around an ennobling man charmed by his human feeling and appeal. President Kim Il Sung’s human feeling, appeal and aroma are so warm and ennobling that they make people attracted and respectful to him.”

Indeed, Kim Il Sung was a great man possessed of boundless human feeling and magnanimity that attracted all the people.

### **His Greatest Pleasure—Gaining Comrades**

Kim Il Sung’s life was characterized by genuine, ardent affection for every one of his comrades.

He had many faithful comrades who followed him and threw in their lot with him even in grim battlefields and in the days of peaceful construction. He brought up each of them with utmost care.

Kim Il Sung devoted great efforts to gaining comrades throughout his life.

He established revolutionary outlook on comrades in his childhood under the influence of his parents and regarded the outlook as his lifelong principle.

In his boyhood he often witnessed his father feeling much satisfied after he had returned from a long trip if he had gained a good comrade. His father's such image left a lingering impression on him.

Having started his struggle with winning comrades, his father taught young Kim Il Sung the truth of life that he must gain true comrades and love and value them. It was one element of the legacy his father left to him.

In his last days his father told him on his sickbed: Good comrades will not fall from heaven nor spring out of the earth; they must be looked for at the great cost by oneself just as gold or precious stones are prospected for, and must be fostered; that is why I have moved around Korea and the wilderness of Manchuria all my life until my feet were blistered, and your mother, too, has had a hard time being hospitable to guests, going hungry all her life; if you have a sincere mind for the country and the people, you can acquire with only a glass of hot water or a potato friendship that is hard to obtain with a mountain of money.

Saying that only he who is ready to die for the sake of his comrades will find good comrades, he told him over and over again to find many good comrades.

His father's remarks were etched in his young mind as a priceless truth of life.

Hwasong Uisuk School was the place where he began his effort to win comrades. In his days at the school he inquired into a new trend

of thought and at the same time, having realized the necessity of an organization, tried to gain comrades one by one with whom he could take the first step in the revolution. His father had often said that one should have reliable comrades and many of them, and that a man could not attain his just and wonderful aim if he had no comrades with whom he could share his fate. It was in the days at the school when he put his father's teaching into practice for the first time.

The comrades he found in his days at Hwasong Uisuk School were the first hardcore members of the Korean revolution.

The name of the Society for Rallying Comrades, the genesis of the Workers' Party of Korea and Korea's first revolutionary party organization, has a profound meaning.

It reflected his far-reaching ambition and revolutionary will to advance and accomplish the Korean revolution by finding and rallying comrades who would share life and death with him.

While following the long and arduous road of gaining comrades, he established a lofty outlook on comrade, the first of its kind in the history of the struggle to liberate the masses of the people—a comrade is a second me, and with comrades I can win the whole world.

For him a comrade was not merely a friend, but his alter ego with whom he could share life and death.

Because he kept such a noble philosophy of comradeship as his creed, he could hold high the slogan of revolutionary comradeship in

the grim annals of the Korean revolution and advance the revolution by dint of comradeship. He began his revolutionary activities by gaining comrades; he obtained arms and founded the party and state only after he gained comrades. Winning comrades was his greatest pleasure.

In his memoirs *With the Century*, he wrote: “Capitalists say they take great pleasure in making money, but I took the greatest pleasure and interest in making comrades.”

When he gained a comrade he felt the greatest delight, and regarded it as a great event and a great fortune as if he had found a pearl in an ocean.

He planned everything with a scientific and detailed calculation and implemented it with brilliant wisdom and resourcefulness throughout his life.

The term *unexpected fortune* was not appropriate for such a man. But when he found a good comrade, he bragged that he met a great fortune.

It is natural that good comrades throng around a man who does things good for his country and people and helpers appear when he faces difficulties as was the case with Kim Il Sung. But whenever he found a good comrade, he was so pleased that he thought it as his great fortune.

Regarding comradeship as the first motive force of the revolution and first process of all undertakings, he exerted himself to win good

comrades and foster comradely relations with them throughout his life.

The Korean people called him not only the great leader and benevolent father but also the great comrade. But this appellation once caused a serious backlash.

Some farmers raised a question to a relevant organ, saying that it was very inappropriate and disrespectful to give the mere title comrade before his name.

Now the Korean people think it quite normal to call him Comrade Kim Il Sung. But in those days this calling seemed to be unacceptable to the naïve farmers.

Comrade is a title commonly used among the revolutionaries who share the same ideology and ideal. For the farmers it was unbearable to give such an ordinary-sounding title to him, the supreme leader of the Korean revolution and nation.

But it could not be helped.

It was not because there was not a better, more respectful title to give him. It was the intention of Kim Il Sung who called every one of his followers comrade, regarding himself as one of them, and valued comradely relations with them more dearly than the official relations between the leader and his subordinates.

He met Choe Hyon, a veteran anti-Japanese fighter, for the first time in September 1933 shortly after the battle of the Dongning county town was over.

It was a brilliant battle which was fought for two days under the command of Kim Il Sung himself. Many Korean and Chinese anti-Japanese guerrilla units took part in it, but Choe Hyon's unit based in Yanji failed to do so because it arrived late as the messenger had conveyed the message late.

Choe Hyon swore at the messenger furiously, and then, recovering his composure, asked Kim Il Sung, "Do you have a plan to attack any other place, sir?"

"Sir? I am younger than you. So just call me by my name, please," Kim Il Sung humbled himself as Choe Hyon was his senior by five years.

"What does a man's age matter here? I've long since regarded you, Commander Kim, as the top man of the Korean army. So it's natural that I address you respectfully," he dug his heels in.

Kim Il Sung reasoned with him saying: If you extol young people in that way, they'll soon become self-conceited and giddy; if you keep on extolling me that way, I'll not keep company with you any longer.

Only then Choe Hyon did give in, saying: For all my courage, you have the upper hand; from now on I'll not call you "sir," just as you wish.

This happened many years ago, but this story still tells of the sincere mind of Kim Il Sung, who regarded rigid formality and pattern as something cumbersome in relations between revolutionary comrades

and rather valued genuine, novel and firm comradeship more dearly.

Similar anecdotes did not arise only during the years of the anti-Japanese struggle.

His demand on his comrades' attitude towards him remained unchanged throughout his life. When he was the commander of the guerrilla army and when he held the position of the supreme leader of the state and the WPK, he considered himself to be a comrade of his subordinates, who shared life and death with them in the struggle for the common cause, and demanded that they treat him as such and felt very pleased when they did so. His was a sincere demand on his beloved revolutionary comrades.

It was an expression of sincerity of the incarnation of true comradeship, who regarded his comrades, not his authority or position, as his greatest asset and their affection and trust as a source of his greatest happiness.

His comrades constituted a source of his pride. He often said that he conducted the revolution always enjoying the affection and protection by his comrades and they loved him more than his parents did.

Kim Il Sung took genuine obligation for his consistent criterion for judging people of various kinds. He regarded those who valued obligation and were ready to sacrifice themselves for it as persons possessed of the loftiest morality and the renegades to the revolution and laggards as despicable ones lacking in moral obligation.

He also took obligation for a criterion for all his thinking and action.

He was often asked how the Korean People's Revolutionary Army could be so strong as to confront Japan, the then newly-emerging military power.

By way of the explanation of the secret to the KPRA's victory in the anti-Japanese armed struggle, he wrote in his memoirs:

“Why was the Korean People's Revolutionary Army so strong? When I am asked this question, I answer that it was because the army was a great mass, kept together through obligation. Had our unity not been based on morality and obligation, but only on the pure community of ideology and will, we could not have been so strong.”

The Korean people's anti-Japanese armed struggle was a bloody revolutionary war, which they fought under the worst situation without enjoying any support of a regular army or state backing. The secret to their victory in the war did not lie in the size of their armed force or superiority of its armaments, but in the rock-solid unity of their armed ranks whose cornerstone was the pure sense of moral obligation of the anti-Japanese fighters.

As a matter of course, law plays an important role in forging unity of the masses of the people, but law alone cannot unite them nor advance the revolution.

Kim Il Sung thought that law was not sufficient for dealing with all

things. From the first days of leading the revolution and construction he maintained that one was grossly mistaken if one thought that it would be possible to control and regulate man's activities by means of coercive means like law.

It was for this reason that he could achieve national independence and people's liberation by leading the anti-Japanese war by dint of revolutionary obligation and unity when the brigandish Japanese imperialists were running amuck to crush the Korean revolution and obliterate the Korean nation by employing all the latest successes of modern military science and the fascist means they had developed in the course of scores of years of their oppressive rules and territorial expansion.

The following happened in May 1971.

Members of the amateur art group of the Wonsan Plastic Commodities Factory for Disabled Soldiers came to Pyongyang to take part in a contest of art groups of disabled soldiers.

A disabled ex-soldier played *Song of General Kim Il Sung* and *The Snow Is Falling* in a performance held in the presence of Kim Il Sung.

When he finished playing, Kim Il Sung gave him a big hand, followed by a thunderous applause from the audience.

The disabled soldier made a deep bow toward the audience and receded from the stage. But soon somebody told him that Kim Il Sung requested an encore. As he mounted the stage again, the applause

suddenly abated for a while before growing loud again.

Perplexed, he guessed he had been so strained because of the presence of Kim Il Sung that he had made a faux pas.

Later he knew that the applause had subsided because the audience saw Kim Il Sung wiping tears with a handkerchief. Although he was an iron-willed and battle-tempered commander who had braved the rains of bullets with his men, he shed tears of gratitude to the disabled ex-soldiers who were continuing to live for the revolution in support of their supreme commander.

When the performance was over, Kim Il Sung stood up. But he could not clap his hands as he was wiping tears from his eyes. After a while he said in deep emotion: While seeing them giving a performance, I could not help but shed tears; they shed blood during the war; I want to have a photograph taken with them; please make necessary arrangements.

He said in the lounge of the theatre that all the disabled ex-soldiers were precious comrades in the revolution, that therefore they should be taken good care of, that their performance should be given wide publicity through newspapers, and that the KPA soldiers should be invited to see their performance.

Frankly speaking, their performance was not very good since the performers were not professional artistes. But for Kim Il Sung, it was not a mere artistic performance but their oath of conviction and

obligation to their Party and leader.

The disabled ex-soldiers had shed their blood in battles against the enemy to repay Kim Il Sung for having liberated them from the fate of colonial slavery, and they had thought it was a natural duty to do so.

But Kim Il Sung took several measures for them—establishing hospitals and schools for their treatment and education, instituting a supplementary allowance system for them and setting up factories in cities and counties for them so that they could continue to work for the revolution.

And when he saw them live optimistically, he praised them and did his best to provide them with more benefits.

It was morality and benevolence that nobody can show but Kim Il Sung, who was possessed of the loftiest sense of moral obligation to his revolutionary comrades.

His obligation to his revolutionary comrades defied limits of time.

Time buries many things in oblivion. For this reason, we are inclined to forget events, no matter how joyful or sad they may be, and even close friends with the passage of time.

Kim Il Sung treated his comrades with the same sense of moral obligation whether they were alive or dead.

He wrote in his memoirs: “A living man must not forget the dead. Only then can their friendship be lasting, true and immortal.”

He thought that if a living man forgot the dead, the friendship

between them would die out there and then.

Without genuine obligation transcending the limits of time and life and death among the revolutionary comrades, there would be no true inheritance of history and the traditions—this was a truth he found while writing the new chapter of history of revolutionary obligation.

A revolution is accompanied with sacrifice. But when one of his comrades passed away, he would grow so sad that he even skipped his meals for several days.

Even a picture fades down with the passing time.

But Kim Il Sung did not forget his dead comrades however long time had passed. A typical example of this is the Revolutionary Martyrs Cemetery on Jujak Peak of Mt Taesong in a suburb of Pyongyang.

When its construction was planned, officials proposed erecting a magnificent monument and inscribing on it the names of the martyrs of the anti-Japanese struggle.

But Kim Il Sung did not agree with them as he wanted to have their busts erected so that posterity could see their lifetime appearances.

The problem was that their photographs were hardly available. To make matters worse, only a few people could remember their faces because many of them had died without even marrying or leaving any children.

But Kim Il Sung remembered the facial features of every one of them. His yearning for them was so ardent that he remembered their

faces after such a long time.

He explained to sculptors the physical features of the martyrs one by one so that they could depict them vividly.

After the cemetery was built, he would look towards it through the window of his office in the then Kumsusan Assembly Hall, and talked with them in his mind whenever he missed the comrades.

One day in August 1960 he saw an old man who was fishing on the Taedong River.

He watched him for a while before asking what his job was.

The old man answered sheepishly that he was a barber at a school for the bereaved children of revolutionary martyrs.

Kim Il Sung praised him with a smile on his face, saying that he was engaged in an excellent job.

He did not say so to solace the old man who was not very proud of his job. He meant what he said as he thought the old man's job was to look after the children of the revolutionary martyrs, his comrades.

He requested him to take good care of the children and continued his journey for field guidance. He felt so grateful to the old man that later he invited him to a lunch.

He regarded it as his responsibility and duty for his departed comrades to take good care of their children.

There are many stories telling of his noble moral obligation; he kept a photograph he had taken with Kim Chaek in his safe throughout his

life, had statues of revolutionary martyrs erected in various parts of the country and had towns, organs and units named after them, and found out their bereaved children and brought them up into senior officials of the country.

So moved by his noble moral obligation for his comrades, Stalin, at a banquet for heads of socialist countries, proposed a toast to the health of Kim Il Sung first and then to the memory of Kim Chaek, the former's right-hand man.

Kim Il Sung's moral obligation defied depth and limits.

He approached every person, be he or she an official working close to him, an ordinary worker or farmer, child, overseas Korean or foreigner, with noble moral obligation. He regarded those foreigners who had helped him even a little in his revolutionary activities as his benefactors and tried his best to fulfil his obligation to them.

Among them were Chinese people associated with his anti-Japanese revolutionary struggle, the Soviet soldiers like Apanasenko and Novichenko and even an ordinary Mongolian woman.

He wrote in his memoirs: "How I wished to be a commoner with an ordinary passport, even for a few months, so that I could travel, wearing canvas shoes and puttees, carrying a knapsack on my back and eating rice balls and sometimes crossing water up to my knees with my trousers rolled up, as I did in the guerrilla army, so that I could look round the old battlefields, cover the graves of

my comrades-in-arms with turves, and exchange greetings with the benefactors who helped and protected me at the cost of their own lives.”

This paragraph is enough to show his sincere longing for his old friends and comrades.

It is exceptional that a head of state wishes to be a commoner, but the reason of his wish was also exceptional; the reason was none other than his sense of obligation.

Kim Il Sung was an incarnation of comradeship who proved the truth that a revolution which advances by dint of unity based on comradeship is ever victorious.

# DAUNTLESS SPIRITUAL STRENGTH

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# 3

Kim Il Sung was a man of dauntless spirit.

From his early days, he grew up learning the dauntless mental strength of his family members including his parents, and lived his whole life with the strength.

The road of the revolution he traversed was beset with manifold hardships and trials that one could not bear with normal human abilities and spiritual strength.

However, he pushed his way through them with indomitable faith and will, courage and pluck, revolutionary passion and optimism in the future.

I have to rise up for my beloved country and people even though the sky may fall—this was his unwavering stand and commitment in his whole life. His indomitable spirit has become not only a prototype of the spiritual strength that the Korean people learn from and embody but also the dignity of Korea.

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## **Matchless Courage and Pluck**

Courage and pluck are a spiritual feature that characterizes a dauntless spiritual strength of a man. A man of such character finds a way out in any adversity; however, a timid, feeble-hearted one hesitates or gives up in the face of a crisis however well-learned or wise he may be. For this reason, someone said meaningful words: The heart can add wisdom, but the latter cannot add the former.

Kim Il Sung led the revolution and construction with matchless courage and pluck.

He dealt with everything with perfect composure in front of any difficulties and trials, planned all undertakings in a bold and ambitious way, and strived with unflinching perseverance to carry out what he had decided.

His courage can be characterized by the composure he displayed in front of aggression and challenge by any strong enemy and all sorts of hardships and trials, advancing against them.

The true value and level of a man's courage are proved in adversity. His courage is estimated when he copes with an unexpected situation, grim trials, and especially the challenges by the hostile forces that attempt to force a war.

Kim Il Sung was a brilliant commander who led two revolutionary wars, vividly showing the level of courage a man should attain in the face of adversity.

The enemies he fought were imperialist powers; Japan was a newly-emerging military power as the “leader” of Asia and the US was a military giant that had boasted of being the strongest in the world, now the world’s “only superpower.”

The revolutionary war against Japan was launched and waged by an unparalleled courage.

In fact it is beyond imagination that one can decide to launch an all-out war with only two pistols against an imperialist power armed with aircraft, tanks and warships.

But Kim Il Sung was an exception. When he declared the war, he had a conviction in his cause of justice and belief in his fellow people, not any guarantee for victory such as a strong support from outside forces or any material and military foundations.

There are so many legendary tales telling of his outstanding courage during the war; when the whirlwind of struggle the national chauvinists waged was raising in the name of “defending” the revolution against “Minsaengdan,” a spy organization formed by the Japanese imperialists, no one dared to stand up against the ultra-Leftist struggle, but he fought against the national chauvinists and saved the Korean revolution from crisis; once he boldly organized celebrations

for a holiday in daylight when the enemy was pursuing the guerrillas.

His dauntless spiritual strength was also demonstrated during the Fatherland Liberation War.

On June 25, 1950, the day when the US unleashed the Korean war, committing an armed invasion on the whole front, officials participating in the emergency meeting of the Cabinet were waiting for Kim Il Sung in suspense. Their faces betrayed anxiety over the urgent, dangerous situation.

At the very moment Kim Il Sung's sonorous voice came into hearing, breaking the silence. He was walking into the conference hall in a dignified manner, saying, "Such fools the Yankees are. They misjudged the Korean people."

Looking round the hall with a bright face, he continued: The Yankees belittle the Korean people; as the saying goes, a wolf must be killed with a stick; we should teach the enemy a lesson by displaying the mettle of Koreans.

All the participants were struck with wonder by his courage and revolutionary mettle, with which he remained unperturbed in the face of aggression by a formidable enemy, and were convinced that they would fight an already-won war.

In the whole course of the war Kim Il Sung resolutely dealt with the enemy with matchless courage.

The US generals, who had won fame during the Second World

War, could not help losing their fame in the Korean war. A US military expert said: The Korean war is characterized as a war in which the US was defeated by Kim Il Sung's art of warfare and a number of its famous generals were killed or removed; his art of warfare was so abstruse that several commanders of the UN Forces and commanders of the US 8<sup>th</sup> Army were replaced because they were defeated by it; in the end there was no general to be dispatched; so did MacArthur and Eisenhower, so-called world-renowned marshals.

Mark Clark, the then commander of the US Far East Command and the UN Forces, after signing the Armistice Agreement in Panmunjom, said, showing the correspondents the fountain-pen he had used when signing the document: I am really disappointed in signing the document. But what can I do as I fought General Kim Il Sung? One hundred Napoleons would not be a match for the DPRK.

That the Korean people could humble the haughty US and opened up a new era of anti-imperialist, anti-US struggle was a fruition of the iron-willed courage and mettle of Kim Il Sung.

His dauntless courage was displayed to the full until the last years of his life.

Even when socialism collapsed one after another in the Eastern European countries, he clearly expressed his iron will to firmly defend the revolutionary standpoint of justice to the end in confrontation with

the imperialist reactionaries through his works including *Let Us Bring the Advantages of Socialism in Our Country into Full Play* (May 24, 1990), *Talk with the Delegation of the Socialist Workers' Party of the United States* (October 5, 1990), *Replies to the Managing Editor of Mainichi Shimbun* (April 19, 1991) and *Ours Is the Socialism of Juche* (April 16, 1994).

When he planned anything, he put forward a high goal that one can never imagine, organized the work in a bold way and regarded attaining the goal as an unbreakable principle.

The West Sea Barrage is one of the many witnesses to the era of the Workers' Party of Korea, which shows his revolutionary drive and persevering practice.

At the Fourth Plenary Meeting of the Sixth Central Committee of the WPK held in October 1981, he presented four projects to be undertaken to harness nature. One of them was the construction of the West Sea Barrage.

At that time some officials and experts presented a plan of damming off the Taedong in front of Wau Island, and expected that the construction would take dozens of years comparing it to the construction of the Volga-Don Ship Canal in Russia and the Danube-Black Sea Canal in Romania.

Saying that the plan would not fully solve the problem of water for the reclaimed tidelands, Kim Il Sung designated its site farther

towards the sea and advanced the task of finishing the project in a few years.

At that time people of a certain country said that it was next to impossible to wall off the sea for 8 kilometres as the sea was deep and the difference between the tides was great, claiming that they would wall off the Bering Strait if the Koreans succeeded in building the dam. However, they could not but admit their misguided thought in front of the dauntless spiritual strength of the Korean leader. Under his audacious and ambitious plan and organization, the soldiers of the Korean People's Army and other builders worked a miracle of building the dam splendidly in five years with their own equipment, materials and technology.

For Kim Il Sung, it was a principle in launching a project and way of work that one should conduct it and carry it out though it may require a great investment and much effort if it can bring benefits to posterity even though the contemporaries may not enjoy them.

This happened when he tasked the officials in the geological prospecting sector to find copper ore in a northern area. The relevant sector repeated prospecting in the area by spending precious funds but failed.

At that time, Kim Il Sung instructed that geological prospecting should not be suspended until copper ore was found. Ensuring that funds greater than those asked by officials were defrayed, he said: It

is alright even though they fail to find copper ore; if copper ore is not found there, we can set up a marker there, inscribed with the words “As there is no copper ore here, do not take the trouble of trying to find it”; then we will save the efforts of posterity to find the ore there; so it would not be too much even though we spend a large sum of money.

Encouraged by his audacity, the geological prospecting sector succeeded in finding copper ore there, contributing greatly to developing the national economy and improving the people’s living standards.

Kim Il Sung despised the style of working on an impulse, and made persistent efforts to carry any undertaking through while conducting it in an audacious and big way.

Once he set a policy, he never retreated or hesitated in carrying it out in any complicated and difficult situation.

At a consultative meeting of senior officials in charge of the chemical industry held in March 1987, stressing the need to further develop the chemical industry and establish the revolutionary habit of living our own way among officials, he added: My father told me that a terrible mistake for the Koreans was to work like a flash in the pan, and that this practice should be eliminated without fail; but for this instruction I had received from my father, I could not have endured the severe trials of the 15-year-long arduous anti-Japanese armed struggle in the mountains; the officials must completely eliminate the flash-in-the-pan work attitude and push ahead with all work persistently.

When he was giving instructions on planting kidney beans on a large scale, he again pointed out the need to eliminate the flash-in-the-pan work attitude. He said: Kidney beans contain much protein; in the past people of Hamgyong provinces were tall and healthy because they ate kidney beans much, though they did not eat eggs; 50 kidney beans contain as much protein as an egg; previously Jagang Province planted kidney beans much, but now it does not do so; our people do not carry any undertaking to the end but give it up before finishing it; this is a big defect of our people; we should conduct a movement of planting kidney beans throughout the country.

Kim Il Sung victoriously led revolution, war, creation and construction in his country with the spirit of attacking any powerful enemy, braving all manner of injustice and turning what were impossible to possible ones. This spirit ran through his career.

In his memoirs, he wrote: I can say that the general direction I have followed through life has been not defence, but attack; since I set out on the road of revolution I have continued to use the strategy and tactic of offence, always counterattacking the enemy; when faced with difficulties in my advance, I have never flinched back or vacillated, nor have I gone round them or tried to escape them; the offensive strategies I used at many stages of our revolution were necessities of our complex and arduous revolution; had I been on the defensive, or had I retreated or used detours in the vortex of world-shaking events, I would never

have been able to break through the many grave situations I faced; I still believe that the revolutionary strategy I established at that time—the strategy of meeting adversity face to face and turning a bad situation into one that was favourable to us—was absolutely the correct one.

Not only in the early days of his revolutionary struggle but also in the days of the anti-Japanese armed struggle he braved all manner of trials with the strategy of meeting them face to face and turning a bad situation into one that was favourable to him.

A poet, while creating the lyrics of *Song of General Kim Il Sung* after the country's liberation, wrote, *Bright traces of blood on the crags of Jangbaek still gleam, Still the Amnok carries along signs of blood in its stream*. As he wrote, the armed struggle against imperialist Japan was a do-or-die war, but Kim Il Sung never loosened or changed the attacking spirit of braving these numerous crises.

During the Arduous March he once overcame a crisis by leading his men to make a decent march in the eyes of the enemy in broad daylight.

The march started in February 1939 on the mountain at the back of a village in Changbai County, China. It was when the main forces of the Korean People's Revolutionary Army were operating in dispersion, so the Headquarters had a small number of guerrillas. And the enemy became aware of the whereabouts of the Headquarters. If the Headquarters delayed or became confused, it might face its end.

In this urgent situation, Kim Il Sung, defying death, decided to

break through an extensive plain by marching from the mountain. He ordered members of the Headquarters to march without pause whether the enemy came or not.

Perplexed, O Paek Ryong, an officer, asked him, “General, if we start the march, the enemy’s gun batteries will open up on us. How can we cross the open country?”

He had never disobeyed Kim Il Sung’s order before, but he regarded this order as impossible at the time.

Kim Il Sung replied: Don’t ask how; keep one machine-gun in front and another in the rear; we must make a forced march; shoot at the enemy wherever they appear, in our front or in our wake; there is no other choice.

The officers and men of the KPRA realized that his was a good plan for overcoming the crisis after they passed through the field and arrived at a forest zone without meeting any provocation by the enemy in a fortress who was too overwhelmed and perplexed by the high spirit of the guerrillas to provoke them.

Recollecting the march, Kim Il Sung said: The guerrillas thought it somewhat strange because the enemy had not as much as sneezed and only looked down at us from their batteries; when in a tight corner, take the plunge and ignore all danger as you fight; if you’re unafraid of death, you will be able to break through any difficulty whatsoever.

When the main forces of the KPRA were surrounded by enemy

troops, numbering thousands, in Xiaotanghe in the spring of 1937, he saw that they were concentrated in forests, and ordered his men to march to an inhabited area along a highroad.

This decision was a risk, but once he was certain, it would succeed. He was confident of success because the risk was accompanied by his unbreakable offensive spirit, which was capable of changing adversity into a victory by switching from defensive to offensive. He also had faith in his ability to calculate scientifically just when to take full advantage of the enemy's weakness.

When the KPRA forces were advancing into the Musan area in the homeland in the spring of 1939, he ordered his men, to the astonishment of the enemy, to march along the Kapsan-Musan guard road, which the Japanese imperialists had built for "mopping up" the guerrilla army and which was waiting for inspection.

During the Korean war in the 1950s he brought the US imperialists what they called "the most shameful defeat in the history of the United States." At the time of the incidents of the US armed spy ship *Pueblo* and the US spy plane *EC-121* in the 1960s, he clarified his resolute stand to return the enemy's "retaliation" with retaliation and their all-out war with an all-out war, smashing their plan of aggression.

In the 1990s when the United States instigated the IAEA to enforce on the DPRK an unfair inspection, he declared: If the United States brings pressure to bear upon us, we will cope with

it resolutely; if it thinks that it can bring us to our knees by means of pressure, it is grossly mistaken; we will launch an immediate, powerful counteroffensive.

Since he risked dangers for the revolution and for his beloved country and people, he did not hesitate to stand on the front lines during the anti-Japanese war and the Fatherland Liberation War.

In front of officials of the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea on October 18, 1966, he said:

“When I was engaged in guerrilla warfare, I used to plunge into the thick of danger, in the teeth of bullets, which could only hit my knapsack and never my body. You can carry on your revolutionary work only when you have such a revolutionary creed.”

In the days of the anti-Japanese armed struggle, the Headquarters of the Korean People's Revolutionary Army was always at the fierce battlefields, where he used to command the battles holding a Mauser in his hand; though the enemy rifles were levelled at the Headquarters, he did not think about his personal safety; sometimes he would plunge himself into a charge holding a machine-gun, and other times he would shower bullets on the enemy bringing up the rear of the marching ranks.

During the Fatherland Liberation War he once went as far as Height 1211, a first line of the front.

On September 23, 1951, when his car arrived at the foot of Jiktong

Pass, it could not go any farther. Getting out of his car and looking at the pass and heights on the front enveloped in flames, he stepped forward along an untrodden path riddled with bomb craters and broken trees here and there, saying that if they could not go by car, they should go on foot.

When his entourage tried to dissuade him, he dug in his heels, saying that if they walked thinking about the soldiers fighting on the heights, they would never feel tired or endangered, and went to Height 1237.3 adjoining Height 1211.

It was when the enemy was firing 30 000 to 40 000 bombs and shells on Height 1211 a day and making a wave-style offensive; days broke and the sun set amid battles. The battles were so fierce that even squirrels took shelter in the trenches of the Korean People's Army soldiers.

Standing on the height and seeing the battlefields with binoculars, he told the front-line commanders the enemy's major direction of attack, saying that Height 1211 was of tremendous strategic importance. Stressing the need to defend the height to the death, he indicated concrete strategic and tactical schemes to this end.

Encouraged by his visit and the schemes he had advanced, the KPA soldiers defended the height at the cost of their lives, shouting the slogan "For the Comrade Supreme Commander!" They thus frustrated the enemy's "summer offensive."

The victory in the Fatherland Liberation War was the one brought about by the indomitable spiritual strength and unrivalled pluck possessed by Kim Il Sung.

Encouraged by his indomitable spiritual strength and pluck, the Korean people, for several decades, achieved miraculous successes in the struggle for defending socialism and in creation and construction after the war.

Kim Il Sung led the revolution and construction with mettle that knew nothing impossible.

Gunpowder manufactured in the guerrilla zones during the anti-Japanese armed struggle was something born of his revolutionary spirit and pluck that one can do anything once one is determined to do.

The previous methods of obtaining gunpowder through revolutionary organizations in the enemy-held areas had been accompanied by a considerable risk of lives. He decided to produce gunpowder in the guerrilla zones. Some people said this was like building a castle on sand, but he thought: If a man is determined enough he can do anything, and we could surely succeed, just as our ancestors succeeded before us. With this thought he began studying in earnest the history of gunpowder manufacture and everything relating to it. In the course of this study, he came to the conclusion that nitre, the basic raw material of gunpowder, could be made manually.

Nitre could be made in any place inhabited by people, and

everyone could see it every day.

One sunny day he took the workers of an arsenal to the yard of an old man's house, where ashes and compost were piled up. He pointed to a substance like white salt, which had formed on the pile of compost, and told them that it was nitre.

When they heard this, the workers burst into laughter, saying that they had been like an old man looking for the pipe he was holding in his hand.

His self-respect had been injured by the sycophantic and nihilistic attitude of those who, on hearing of an invention of another country, would praise the exceptional brain-power of the people of that country, but shrug their shoulders in doubt when they heard that a Korean had invented something. The first experiments were not successful, but he was not dispirited by failure; he had the experiments repeated and at last discovered the ideal proportions for compounding the powder. This opened a bright prospect for making gunpowder manually in the guerrilla zones.

Maize farming conducted on a large scale in the DPRK is also a fruition of his pluck.

When he advanced the policy of farming maize on a large scale after the Korean war, some conservatives, sceptical of it, were against it as it was the first try in the country. But under the active support of the masses of the people he ensured that maize farming was conducted

across the country, overcoming conservatism and passivism. This greatly helped the country solve the food problem, which had been knottiest after the war.

Kim Il Sung would resolve all problems with composure however serious the situations were, turning misfortune into blessing.

One day during the strategic, temporary retreat in the days of the Fatherland Liberation War, Kim Il Sung called the commander of the Guard Regiment to organize a march by the Bodyguard Company, singing songs, through the streets of the city.

The commander was dumbfounded for he knew too well how serious the situation on the front was.

On his order the Bodyguard Company closed the ranks and marched, singing *Song of National Defence*.

As the voices of the company rang suddenly and loudly across the streets of the city, which had been depressed by the prospects of retreat, thousands of civilians ran out to the streets to exclaim, “That’s the Bodyguard Company!” and “The Bodyguard Company is by our side. So the Supreme Commander will be near us.” They were convinced that they were fighting an already-won war.

It was only when all the organs in the capital city began retreat that the Bodyguard Company left the city with Kim Il Sung.

For decades after the war the US and the Republic of Korea, its puppet, attempted several times to ignite another war on the Korean

peninsula, but Kim Il Sung led the Korean people, saying that even if a war were to break out tomorrow, they should continue with socialist construction until midnight tonight.

When the US provoked the Gulf of Tonkin Incident and Cuban Missile Crisis in the 1960s and drove the situation on the Korean peninsula to the brink of war, he said: Not to conduct economic construction as we should, thinking that everything would be destroyed if a war breaks out, is an expression of defeatism that drives people into fear and despair; we should not merely think that everything would be destroyed if a war breaks out, but think of defeating the enemy; construction should not be suspended until the very day before the outbreak of a war.

It was his view that a war would not destroy everything and, even though everything is destroyed, they can be reconstructed, and in a more splendid way at that.

The US did not unleash another war not because the Korean people were armed with state-of-the-art military hardware; it felt feeble-hearted in front of Kim Il Sung's daring pluck and mettle.

With this pluck and mettle Kim Il Sung led his people and the army throughout his life.

## **Burning Passion**

Kim Il Sung performed immortal exploits, braving all difficulties with burning passion.

He lived his whole life with superhuman passion.

From the first days of his revolutionary struggle, he burned his heart with infinite devotion to the revolution, warm love of his countrymen and burning passion.

His energetic activities for over 80 years were one of the important factors for his leading his people along the road resplendent with victory. Thanks to his energetic leadership, the DPRK could abolish the centuries-old backwardness and poverty and develop into a powerful socialist country, independent in politics, self-supporting in the economy and self-reliant in defence.

Once the head of a Southeast Asian country asked him how long he slept a day.

Kim Il Sung replied: You have asked me how long I sleep a day; I have gone to bed late at night and woken up early in the morning since the days of the anti-Japanese revolutionary struggle; now it has become a habit; sometimes I work until dawn.

Throughout his life Kim Il Sung felt a shortage of time. So he

worked regarding an hour as a hundred, nay a thousand, days. Not a single day could be an off-day for him all his life not only in the period of the anti-Japanese armed struggle but also in the days of the building of a new nation, the grim Fatherland Liberation War, post-war rehabilitation and socialist construction.

Whenever officials pleaded with him to avoid working till late at night and starting to work early in the morning, he would say that the habit could not be changed easily.

He once told them: Getting up early in the morning is a habit developed in the long course of my life; when we were fighting in the mountains (against the Japanese imperialists), they would attack us at dawn, when we fell fast asleep after marching at night; they could be said to have chosen a very appropriate time, for we were sleeping at that time like a log as we were exhausted; so, how could I, in charge of the destiny of the unit, sleep in peace? since then I have woken up at dawn every day.

After a while he said: I promised to sleep in peace after achieving the country's liberation, but I could not sleep at dawn also in the period after the liberation because I had much work to do; so I said to my comrades, who were worrying about my health, that I would sleep in peace after the Party, the state and the army were founded; then, the war broke out and after it reconstruction started, followed by the grand march of Chollima; at that time we lagged

behind the others, so how could we overtake them if we slept and had rest enough? so the life didn't let me sleep in peace till late in the morning; from this, the habit of getting up early at dawn developed and I think I cannot correct that habit throughout my life; good health is for the revolution and revolutionaries cannot pause revolutionary work even a moment.

It was unbearable for him not to live as a revolutionary, not to burn his heart with passion for his country and fellow people.

When he was making preparations in Hyangha-ri, Janggang County, Jagang Province, for the Third Plenary Meeting of the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea, which was held in December 1950—in the period of the Fatherland Liberation War—he sat up for two nights. When he felt sleepy while writing the report to the meeting, he would shake off sleep by washing his face with cold water at a well outside.

When soldiers worried about his health, he said: A war is a confrontation of passion as well as a confrontation of faith and will. No matter how harsh the trials are, we must hasten victory by dint of burning passion.

After completing the report in this way, he delivered the speech at the plenary meeting the next morning without having a moment's rest.

One day in November 1968, he left Pyongyang early in the

morning to give on-site guidance at the then Ryonggang Chicken Farm in South Phyongan Province.

He had consulted with senior officials of the Cabinet and officials of Pyongyang and provinces for several days on how to develop poultry farming and improve the people's living standards, and finally decided to acquaint himself with the situation and take relevant measures on site.

That day he looked round the Ryonggang Dairy Farm and convened at the Chongsan Cooperative Farm a consultative meeting of leading officials of the Kangso Chicken Farm, Ryonggang Chicken Farm, Ryonggang Dairy Farm and Chongsan Cooperative Farm until well over 1 o'clock in the afternoon. He could not have a moment's rest until then.

Officials tried to guide him to a restaurant for lunch, but he said that he did not have much time, for he had so many things to do that day, and that he could have a snack in his car. Then he ate a few boiled potatoes and slices of bread he took with him, before leaving for another on-site guidance trip.

On arriving at Pyongyang, he directly went to an office in the building of the WPK Central Committee and went over the samples of the winter clothes to be supplied to the students and children.

Time went by, and when the closing time was up, an official told him to go home.

He said that the weather was getting colder and he could not feel easy with the central heating in Pyongyang, and that he also wanted to see how the public welfare establishments, nurseries and kindergartens had been laid out.

He then went to a neighbourhood unit in Central District and inquired about the people's living and came back late in the evening to his office to continue his work.

In the small hours that day he wrote works, titled, *On Relieving the Strain on Transport* published on November 16 and *Some Problems in Manpower Administration* published on the same day. And after finishing the works, he put the manuscripts into his bag, saying he would give finishing touches to them at home.

In view of the fact that he woke up at 4 o'clock in the morning, he had only about two hours for sleeping.

The physical limits of humans set by nature cut no ice with his mental strength displayed in his passion-filled work schedule.

One Sunday, officials, out of worry about his health, asked him to have a rest that day.

Smiling, he said: Rest is not something special; for me there is no better rest than looking round factories and farms; when there is a lot of complicated work, I regard it as a rest to launch into a new task with a new feeling after finishing one; I am very pleased when, while meeting others, I find a clue to solving a problem which I have been thinking

for so long or find a problem which I have failed to notice; these are all a good rest for me; I don't need special rest.

As rest was integrated into work, there was no rest separated from work for him.

He used to say to officials that they could make a revolution only when they acquired the habit of working so zealously that they forgot that it was night or it was time to eat, even though they might collapse tomorrow from all the work they had done today.

His energetic activities cannot be recalled only on the time line; he walked long rough roads regardless of weather.

For the liberation of his country, he overcame more trials in the Mt Paektu area than anybody else, and blazed a trail in building a new nation after its liberation. He lived his whole revolutionary life with passion.

On August 26, 1966, the weather was foul; the waves raged in the sea and a strong wind howled. On the day, however, Kim Il Sung gave on-site guidance at Pidan Island on the West Sea to solve the problem of clothing for the people.

As the weather was so bad, the Political Committee of the WPK Central Committee had decided that he must not go to the island, but he dug his heels in, saying that he had to go there as he had made the determination for the wellbeing of the people, and boarded a boat.

All the roads on the island got so muddy in the rain, so it was difficult to take steps.

Seeing the officials hesitate, he said that there was no need for them to come as far as the island if they were to visit the island for form's sake. Then, he walked on the muddy road in the vanguard of the party.

The simple military overcoat he used to wear when giving on-site guidance after the war is exhibited in the Korean Revolution Museum. Whenever seeing that threadbare overcoat frayed around the collar, every visitor cannot resist being moved to tears. Every strip of the overcoat is permeated with the strenuous efforts and warm affection for the people of the leader who walked a long, long road without respite in order to save the destiny of the revolution, the country and the nation from crises and to provide the people with an abundant and cultured life.

With this passion he devoted his whole life to his country and fellow people and achieved such great exploits no one else can even think of.

It is not by chance that the whole world praises him highly as an outstanding and preeminent man representative of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

His people-bound train which started its engine at the first dawn of building a new Korea had never stopped till the last days of his life; he

worked full of passion throughout his life.

When he met a woman veteran of the anti-Japanese struggle, he recollected what President Tito of Yugoslavia had told him during his visit to the DPRK: President Tito told me that now that I have turned Pyongyang for example, which was leveled during the war, into a magnificent city, I deserve a rest, and asked me to stop working and have rest; but I intend to continue working; a revolutionary's zeal for work knows no bound; if I see a big structure built for the people and a good thing made for them, I want to provide bigger structures and better things to them.

He dealt with state affairs with unbelievable passion, meeting many people from various social strata, until the last days of his life. For several years before he died, he met all the anti-Japanese revolutionary veterans and sons and daughters of the people who were related with the revolution, and whenever he found some spare time he would write his memoirs.

In fact, he was afflicted with a heart disease in his later years. On top of this, he contracted an eye disease. So in 1994, the year when he died, he delivered his New Year Address with difficulty, holding the manuscript in his hand. He underwent an eye operation. Even a young man must rest for at least a month after such an operation. However, a few days after the operation, he met Son Won Thae, an overseas Korean, and had a photograph taken with participants in the

Fifth Congress of the Korean Children's Union.

In several months before he died, he met many working people like participants in the National Agricultural Conference and the National Conference of Workers in the Coal-Mining Industry, and had photographs taken with them. Just before his death, on July 5 and 6, he presided over a consultative meeting of senior officials in the economic sector and gave them important guidelines they should adhere to in socialist economic construction.

He gave on-site guidance at more than 40 units in several sectors of the national economy and the army in two years' time from April 1992, his 80<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary, to the last day of his life. Though he shouldered heavy burden even when he was so old, he regarded it as his own duty and worked with passion.

He worked devotedly not only for his country but also for the world. He visited foreign countries on 106 occasions, covering a total of 522 000km. And he met innumerable foreigners from various walks of life including heads of state and politicians during his visits to foreign countries or in his country and had talks with them over important political issues, giving them his advice. Sometimes he met foreigners on several occasions a day.

In the last days of his life he met Carter, former president of the United States, and laid a solid foundation for improving the DPRK-US relations and safeguarding the peace and security of

northeast Asia and the rest of the world.

Indeed, Kim Il Sung burned his heart with ardent passion for the continuous advance of the Korean revolution and greater happiness of his people.

## **Optimist Full of Emotions**

Kim Il Sung was a sheer optimist throughout his life.

He victoriously led the Korean revolution which was more difficult and complicated than the revolutions in other countries. One of the main reasons for this was that he was possessed of the spirit of revolutionary optimism, with which he overcame hardships cheerfully.

Whenever difficulties cropped up in the way of the revolution, he surmounted them with the staunch spirit of revolutionary optimism.

He wrote in his memoirs:

“A man’s physiological age is affected by the degree of his optimistic attitude to life. Likewise, the success or vitality of a revolution in a country depends on the revolutionary optimism of its people. This is my firmly held view.”

He suffered more hardships than anybody else and experienced a lot of bone-aching pains of loss. But he never grew pessimistic

nor vacillated in the face of them.

In particular, whenever trials and difficulties cropped up in the way of the revolution, he broke through them with optimism about victorious future. His revolutionary optimism constituted the basis of his outstanding leadership, with which he achieved victory at every stage of the revolution by turning misfortune into blessing.

In the periods of the anti-Japanese revolutionary struggle and the grim Fatherland Liberation War, he overcame all the difficulties with confidence in victory and optimism that he could emerge victorious because he had the people, faithful comrades and armed forces.

The Korean People's Revolutionary Army commanded by Kim Il Sung had to wage a resistance war against the regular armed forces of Japan, which boasted of being the leading power in Asia, under the most difficult and arduous conditions, as it had neither a state nor a regular army to back it up.

Sometimes the guerrillas had to fight a bloody battle to obtain food and clothes, and other times march for several days waging do-or-die battles against the enemy who were tenaciously chasing them.

But all these trials and difficulties had no influence on his optimism.

He made use of every odd moment to inspire his men with optimism. He used to say: After the country has become independent, let us go

to Pyongyang and eat mullet soup and cold noodles and then climb Moran Hill to enjoy a view of the Taedong River!

He led them to live optimistically singing songs and dancing however harsh the conditions were. Sometimes he personally created revolutionary songs and dramas and disseminated them among the guerrillas and people.

He organized military and political training on a regular basis and arranged amusement parties at moonlit nights and joint celebrations of soldiers and people on holidays, training the guerrillas into revolutionaries and bringing the victory of the struggle by dint of their unyielding fighting spirit.

On May Day in 1940, the guerrillas had nothing to eat but frog though it was a holiday. That day he said to them: Although we celebrated May Day eating frog meat, we will defeat Japanese imperialism and celebrate the liberation of our homeland in Pyongyang by feasting on the soup of mullet caught in the Taedong River; the enemy is now making frantic efforts to destroy us, but we will never be brought to our knees; let us all fight more determinedly to destroy the Japanese imperialist aggressors and liberate our motherland, with a firm confidence in the future and with the lofty pride of the Korean nation and Korean communists.

This revolutionary optimism about the future and conviction that the day would surely come and then they would live a happy life

in the liberated country gave birth to the indomitable fighting spirit which enabled the Korean revolutionaries to achieve the historic cause of national liberation. Inspired by this revolutionary optimism, the guerrillas could make Yongil bombs with their bare hands in the primeval forests.

Although she was arrested and lost both of her eyes at the hands of the enemy, a woman guerrilla shouted on the gallows that she could still see the victory of the revolution.

As he did in the period of anti-Japanese struggle, Kim Il Sung overcame all the trials during the grim Fatherland Liberation War on the strength of revolutionary optimism.

His optimistic spirit constituted the basis of the mass heroism and optimism the Korean people displayed in the Fatherland Liberation War, in which they fought against the armies of the US and its satellite countries in defence of the sovereignty, dignity and territory of their country.

His revolutionary optimism remained unchanged in the period of post-war reconstruction, when his country had to start everything anew on the ruins of the war, and in the period, when it was building socialism in the face of the US imperialists' continuous manoeuvrings for war and the intensive obstructive moves by revisionists, opportunists and great-power chauvinists.

He said about his revolutionary optimism in talks he had with the

veterans of the anti-Japanese revolutionary struggle in March 1992 and January 1993: I have lived and am still living cheerfully with a firm conviction that there will be a way out even if the sky falls in and with an unshakable confidence in victory.

He had a special viewpoint on an optimistic life; he believed that when the people and soldiers live optimistically they can possess soaring revolutionary zeal, combat morale and enthusiasm for production and live an ennobling and cultured life, and that victory in a war is not decided by the numbers of soldiers and their weapons and equipment but by their spiritual strength and revolutionary confidence of the people and service personnel in victory.

One day during the grim war, he guided a meeting of a WPK cell in Hajang-ri, Ryongchon County, North Phyongan Province. After the meeting was over, he said to the members of the cell that Party members should overcome all difficulties and trials in the vanguard of the masses and live optimistically especially in hard times. Then he continued: Only those with confidence in victory and strong will can live optimistically in the face of grim trials of war without showing any traces of pessimism and frustration; breaking through difficulties while living optimistically full of confidence—this is the mettle of the fighting Korean people today, and no force can bring such a people to their knees.

It was his consistent standpoint that one should organize one's

life in a more optimistic and cheerful way when one has a hard time. He once said: The life of the anti-Japanese guerrillas in the past was incomparably harder than that of the workers, however hard their work might be; but they lived in an optimistic and cultural atmosphere at that time and by so doing, they could always keep their high revolutionary spirit.

Kim Il Sung's life was the life of an optimist. He often said: According to my experience in life, song is a symbol of revolutionary optimism and victory in the revolution; human lives need poetry, song and dance; what pleasure would there be in living without them?

He loved art and literature very much; when he had spare time, he used to create works of art and literature.

It is widely known that during the days of the anti-Japanese revolutionary struggle, he personally created revolutionary dramas and operas including *The Sea of Blood*, *The Flower Girl*, *Blood at an International Conference*, *The Fate of a Self-Defence Corps Man* and *The Mountain Shrine* and revolutionary songs including *Nostalgia* and *Song of Anti-Japanese War*.

He not only liked enjoying art and literary works like novels and films, but was also a good singer and instrumentalist.

His favourite songs included *Revolutionary Song*, *Song of the Sea*, *Song of Chollima Movement Pioneers* and *Death to the Enemy*.

The following happened one spring day, when he was giving on-

site guidance in South Phyongan Province. In the evening an official heard someone playing the harmonica in the garden in front of Kim Il Sung's lodgings. Attracted by its lilting sound, he went there to find who was playing the harmonica so skilfully. To his surprise, it was none other than Kim Il Sung.

He had once seen Kim Il Sung playing the organ, but it was the first time he saw him playing the harmonica. More officials gathered in no time. When he finished playing the revolutionary songs *Guerrilla March* and *Song of People's Power*, they clapped their hands with admiration and asked him an encore.

But he said that he would finish there, adding that if he were not the President of the state and General Secretary of the Party, then he would arrange a concert in his house every evening and invite them.

Officials, however, were insistent on their request.

He laughed and said to them. "Don't pester me. Now it's your turn. People should live optimistically. A revolutionary should be an optimist who knows no pessimism."

There was a time when Kim Il Sung enjoyed listening to the sound of a grass harp someone played somewhere near his place in the evenings.

But one day an official, guessing that the sound might disturb him, sent the player away.

On learning about this, Kim Il Sung was very regretful and told the

official that he should not have done that.

He also liked sports very much. He was good at swimming, tennis and table-tennis and enjoyed hunting. But he could hardly find enough time for this. If he had any chance, he used it not for a rest but to conceive major strategies and tactics of the revolution and to provide solutions to the knotty problems arising in the reality. But no matter how heavy was the burden he shouldered for the revolution, his optimism about the revolution and life never vanished or was weakened.

He led the Korean revolution and the cause of global independence to victory while living in an optimistic way.

In March 1986, when he met the general secretary of the Costa Rican Socialist Party who was visiting the DPRK again, Kim Il Sung said to him: You said I look as energetic and young as I was ten years ago; when he met me, a foreign leader also told me like that.

Then he continued: If he does not want to grow old, a man should always live optimistically without falling victim to pessimism and depression; until now, I have never given in to pessimism and depression no matter how difficult and complex problems I faced were and how many trials cropped up in the way of the revolution, but always lived optimistically while thinking of the Korean saying that there will be a way out even if the sky falls in.

Indeed, Kim Il Sung was an incarnation of indomitable spiritual

strength, who worked and lived optimistically with the iron will that the success and vitality of a revolution and the loftiness of human life are decided by revolutionary optimism. And as the Korean revolution was led by such an optimist like him, it could invariably advance full of youthful vigour despite all the harsh ordeals of history.

# GREAT COMMONER

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# 4

Even though he had performed immortal exploits for the history and people, shouldering the heavy burdens of the revolution and construction, Kim Il Sung lived like a commoner.

Always sharing the life of the common people, he was not different from them in clothes, foods and other details of life.

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## Unaffected Thinking and Practice

One of the most important features of Kim Il Sung in his personality as a commoner was unbounded modesty.

His ennobling modesty was concentrated in the words *son of the people*. It was a principle he consistently adhered to in his whole life to approach the people modestly when dealing with them.

In February 1935, during the period of the anti-Japanese armed struggle, he suffered from a severe chill. At that time he was in the first expedition to northern Manchuria (October 1934-February 1935) at the request of the Chinese communists in northern Manchuria, leading an expeditionary force of the Korean People's Revolutionary Army composed of about 170 soldiers. After finishing the political and military tasks of the expedition there, the expeditionary force began to return to Wangqing, their home base.

The guerrillas were faced with severe trials and difficulties in every step—persistent chase by the Japanese “punitive” troops, biting cold, shortage of food, continuous battles and ensuing human loss, and diseases. The enemy continually attacked them, clamouring that to kill one communist at the cost of a hundred men was a success because they could replenish that many whereas the guerrillas could not. While

marching with the guerrillas, Kim Il Sung used to stand on duty every night like other guerrillas.

Unfortunately, he caught a chill near Tianqiao Pass. In the critical situation, when the 16 guerrillas collapsed down in frustration around the sledge carrying him, Kim Il Sung, though in faint consciousness, composed the revolutionary song *Song of the Anti-Japanese War*.

The song gave strength to the guerrillas. They crossed Tianqiao Pass, singing the song, and reached the house of Jo Thack Ju in Dawaizi valley in the Laoyeling Mountains.

Thanks to the devoted care of the old man's family, Kim Il Sung could restore his health miraculously.

On hearing the whole story from his orderly, he said to the old man, "Thank you, grandfather. I owe my life to your family."

"Don't mention it. God gave birth to you General Kim, and you have been saved in this log-cabin by God's will, not by my family," replied the old man.

"Grandfather, I don't think I'm worthy of your compliment. It is too much to compare me with a general born of heaven. I am a son and grandson of the people. I was born into an ordinary peasant family."

Surprised, the old man said that though he was living a hermit life, he had heard a lot about his battle achievements. And then he

made his offspring make a deep bow to him.

*Son of the people*—these simple words reflected his firm outlook on life, with which he lived among the people and found the real worth and pleasure of living in doing so.

These words denote a man who is born of the people and lives with them. Of course, Kim Il Sung was born of the people and lived with them. However, he was endowed with outstanding qualities and, therefore, no one regarded him as an ordinary man.

Stalin of the former Soviet Union praised him as the youngest hero from the East, and Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai of China asked him to look after the future of the cause of independence of mankind before they passed away. Tito of the former Yugoslavia, when he met Kim Il Sung, opened his innermost heart, paying special attention to his relationship with the DPRK leader, and, before passing away, asked him to take care of the future of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Jimmy Carter, former president of the United States, on his return after meeting him in Pyongyang, said that the DPRK leader was greater than the three most illustrious US presidents put together.

However, Kim Il Sung remained modest and simple until the last days of his great career. When he met a journalist delegation from CNN International on their visit to the DPRK in April 1994, he said to them: Many people around the world seem to be greatly interested in

me, because I am one of the senior politicians; I am an ordinary man as other people are.

He reviewed his glorious career in the introduction to his memoirs:

“I have never considered my life to be extraordinary. I am content and proud to think that my life has been dedicated to my country and nation and spent in the company of the people.”

Though he was the leader of the ruling Workers’ Party of Korea and the state, he was boundlessly modest before them.

The prestige of the WPK and the state was his dignity, and the main source of their invincible might was inconceivable separated from his preeminent leadership. This explains the reason why the Korean people called the WPK and the state the party of Comrade Kim Il Sung and Kim Il Sung’s Korea, and visioned the bright future of the Korean revolution in connection with his outstanding ideas and leadership.

However, he was more modest in front of the Party and the state than anybody else. All his thoughts and practices started from his view that he was an ordinary citizen of the country and a member of the Party.

When he received an assignment from the Party organization he belonged to and reported its implementation to the organization, he would say that it was a natural duty of a WPK member to receive Party assignments and implement them.

Not to consider job-ranking and not to allow double standards in

discipline in the Party—this was his stand towards the Party, which he stressed to officials and showed through his practical examples.

When cells were organized under the Central Organizing Committee of the Party after the liberation of Korea from Japanese military occupation, he presented before others his CV to the cell he belonged to. And during the Fatherland Liberation War, when he was shouldering the heavy burden of the war, he paid his Party dues to his cell secretary early on the morning of December 21, 1950 after he had burned midnight oil the previous night writing the report to the Third Plenary Meeting of the Central Committee of the WPK, titled, *The Present Situation and the Immediate Tasks*.

A woman official, who was assisting him in his activities beside him, was once surprised after seeing an account book of Party dues of the members of the Party cell he belonged to; recorded in it were his salary by month and the corresponding Party dues he had paid, as well as his signatures.

She had known too well how modest Kim Il Sung was, but she had not known that he had been receiving his salary and paying his Party dues like other Party members.

Later, though she knew it was a presumptuous question, she asked him if he, too, received salary.

After looking at her as if he could not understand what she was meaning, he answered with a broad smile on his face: Why should I not

receive my salary when I am, too, a citizen of the Republic?

When he met foreign politicians and other figures as the General Secretary of the WPK Central Committee and President of the DPRK, he was frank in saying that he, as a member of the WPK, also carried out the Party's assignments.

On June 23, 1984, he arrived at Kirov via Yaroslav of the former Soviet Union. He was on his way back home after winding up his visits to the east European socialist countries for nearly 50 days, covering a distance of some 24 000km.

The first secretary of the provincial Soviet party committee and other senior officials of the local party and power organs warmly greeted him.

After receiving bouquets from the Soviet children, he had a stroll with the local officials on the platform, waiting for his train to get ready to leave.

At that time the first secretary said: Please have a day's rest here; you have made a really long journey.

Expressing his thanks to the host's offer, Kim Il Sung said: I have visited the European socialist countries in spite of the long journey; I have visited them in pursuance of a decision of our Party; a member of a party must carry out its decision without any conditions attached.

His visit to the European socialist countries was part of official

external activities he conducted as the top leader of the Party and state, but as he regarded himself as an ordinary member of his Party and his external activities, which no others could conduct in his place, as an assignment given by the Party, foreigners as well as the Korean officials accompanying him could not repress their admiration for his noble personality.

He viewed abiding by the rules and regulations of the state voluntarily as a sacred duty of a citizen, and wherever he went, he regarded it as an absolute duty of his to abide by the established rules and regulations.

On October 8, 1962, an election of Deputies to the Third Supreme People's Assembly was held.

In order to cast vote with the working people at a constituency, he went out of his house early in the morning.

Getting in the car, he asked his aide if he had his citizenship card with him.

The aide and the chauffeur were surprised.

*A citizenship card is a kind of document certifying that the bearer is a citizen of a country. He is the head of state, and if he went to the polling station without it, there would be no one who would fail to recognize him and it would make no trouble.*

“You don’t need to take it, leader. You’re busy. We have to make haste,” said the aide.

Kim Il Sung said: As you have said, I might cast vote without my citizenship card, but I must go to the polling station with it.

He meant that he was no exception in obeying the established election regulations as a citizen of the Republic.

He continued: I have never thought I am a special being, riding roughshod over the people; it may take time, but please bring my citizenship card.

He waited until the aide brought his citizenship card, and left for the polling station after examining it carefully to find if there was any part spoiled and putting it in his pocket. On arriving at the polling station, he showed the card to the officials of the relevant election committee, received a ballot and put it in the ballot box.

He once visited a school, whose students were sitting for graduation examination.

Officials had failed to give prior notice to the school about his visit.

It was half past nine, when they arrived at the school in the company of Kim Il Sung.

The campus was quiet.

The school building was an old one, so its corridor was narrow and dingy.

A young duty-student wearing an arm band was sitting in the hall. She bowed to the guest but failed to recognize him.

When he took a step towards the corridor after returning her bow,

the student said in a clear voice, “Please write down your name in the visitor registration book before going in, sir.”

Officials got perplexed as they did not know whether to tell her who he was or rebuke her for her misbehaviour.

But, Kim Il Sung, as if feeling proud of her, said with a beaming face, “I see. You’re right. I’ll do as you told me.”

He received the visitor registration book and a pencil from her, and wrote down the date, the person he was going to see, the reason of his visit, his occupation and name.

When he stretched himself after putting down the pencil, the girl looked at him with her eyes wide open, and she scrutinized the book with doubtful eyes.

Too moved, she called him, but her voice trailed away. Her face grew red as she felt both delighted to see him and shameful for her failure to recognize him.

Stroking her on the head, Kim Il Sung said, “A clever girl. Very clever.”

Seeing him complying with a request of a student to abide by regulations though he had created an excellent education system for the rising generations, both the girl and officials felt tears welling up in their eyes.

Kim Il Sung was modest in learning, too.

Though he possessed versatile and profound knowledge, he did

his best throughout his life to learn more. It was his lifelong goal to build a tower of ideology and knowledge higher by learning diligently.

In the concluding speech he delivered at the Seventh Plenary Meeting of the Fourth Central Committee of the WPK on September 5, 1963, he said, “We must learn humbly, without exception. Ignorance is not a crime, but pretending to know while being ignorant causes big trouble.”

He hated and uncompromisingly combatted three kinds of pretense all his life—pretending to have what they did not have, pretending to be men of great character even when they were paltry fellows and pretending to know what they did not know. The worst of them was pretending to know when one was ignorant.

He thought there was no greater danger than not knowing one’s own capability. He used to tell his officials: If one is to succeed in any undertaking, one must know one’s own capability, whether it is weak or strong, for instance, whether it is worth 50 *jon* or one *won* in value; only then, can they make honest efforts to prepare themselves and conduct their work efficiently according to their own actual capability and preparedness.

He once said that the working method of the officials who pretended to be well-informed was a sightseer’s way, if regarded from a favourable viewpoint, and an idler’s way, if put pointblank. This was the reason

why he told his officials whenever an opportunity arose that they, without exception, should not pretend to know what they were ignorant of, but say frankly that they did not know and learn open-mindedly, and that their prestige would not be injured simply because they asked others what they did not know.

The teachers from whom he learned with an open-hearted attitude and stand throughout his life were the masses of the people.

In the speech he delivered at a consultative meeting of chairpersons of provincial committees of the WPK on March 1, 1953, *On Some Immediate Tasks of Provincial Party Organizations*, he said, “Officials should always regard the masses of the people as their teachers, learn from them open-heartedly and conduct their work by relying on them.”

His modesty was based on the point of view that the people he worked with were not only his revolutionary comrades but also his teachers who were well-versed in everything and presented excellent opinions. Proceeding from this view, he was boundlessly modest in approaching them and tried in real earnest to learn from them.

To him, books were silent teachers and the people were the most resourceful and best-informed teachers. So he listened attentively to anyone.

The various demands and desires of these individual persons were crystallized into the lines and policies of the WPK and the state and

the guidelines of the revolution and construction. And it is no doubt these lines and policies were very scientific and comprehensive.

## Always Among the People

Carter, in an interview with the Thai newspaper *The Nation* in November 1999, five years after his meeting with Kim Il Sung, said that as President Kim Il Sung was unceremonious and modest, talks with him had gone well.

Kim Il Sung was so unceremonious when he was talking to people that everyone felt his warm affection at first sight, and could not but open their hearts. With a sunny smile on his face, he made friends with anyone and made others laugh with a good sense of humour and with plain and simple words. Such extraordinary charisma was by no means comparable to any diplomatic skills or tricks.

His charisma was based on his warm and friendly style of speech.

Speech, the basic means of communication, represents not only one's level of intellectual attainment but also one's viewpoint and attitude towards the interlocutor. Engels once said that language is practical and realistic consciousness which exists for others and, only in so doing, exists for oneself. His definition can be regarded as an aphorism meaning that one's speech is decisive of one's attitude

towards others and of one's character and personality.

As the speech by Kim Il Sung always came from the bottom of his heart, it never failed to attract others. He met people from all walks of life and his talks were full of respect, love, affection for and belief in humans.

They all looked forward to meeting him, but many of them, when they really met him, could not offer a proper greeting in front of him.

As he fully understood how they felt, he would try to make them feel comfortable.

His friendly talk always started with his gentle and kindly greeting. Wherever he went, he would give his greetings first before others did, be they ordinary workers, farmers and even children.

He would offer a kind greeting by saying he was glad to meet them, and warmly inquire after their health. He would also express his true happiness of meeting them by saying that he was very pleased to see them or it was very good of them to have come to see him. Sometimes, he would apologize to them, saying that he was sorry for having been late or for having kept them waiting even though he afforded his precious time in spite of busy schedule for taking care of state affairs.

He was the president of a country, but he received people by offering a gentle, kind and honest greeting first. His greeting full of respect, trust and friendliness was his unique way of conversation which attracted

people by making them feel at home then and there.

While his warm-hearted and friendly greeting was the opening words that let others feel relaxed and showed his sincerity to have an honest and openhearted conversation, his simple and plain words had power that attracted and fascinated others.

Not to mention his talks to officials and working people, his reports and speeches in major Party and state conferences were also delivered in plain and colloquial words. In particular, when he had a talk to a worker, farmer, intellectual, artist or any other ordinary working people, his words were so appropriate to their psychology, plain and comprehensible that they could not believe they were talking to the President.

Plain and comprehensible words are easy, interesting and understandable to anyone. They include many vivid figures of speech, clear expressions and common terms, and so people can easily acquire the truths of life and struggle.

Although he was a great thinker and outstanding statesman, Kim Il Sung would speak to anyone in plain and comprehensible words. That was why everybody was engrossed in conversations with him and easily understood the gist and content of his words.

In May 1972, Selig Harrison, a research fellow of the US Carnegie Foundations met Kim Il Sung. He said that President Kim Il Sung received his questions very gently, was cooperative and answered

in a comprehensible way, and that he was a man of warm heart and great charisma.

Kim Il Sung's plain and simple style of speech can be characterized by the use of vivid figures of speech and clear expressions. When he formulated an idea, a theory or a policy, he used a lot of aphorisms and figures of speech. When he talked to people, he expanded on the topic in a vivid way by employing plain, everyday language.

The followings are some of the examples.

He defined the ideal society in which man's independence is realized as a society in which all its people live on white rice and meat soup and in silk clothing and tile-roofed houses. He also likened rail transport, a vanguard of the national economy, to arteries of the country.

When he referred to man's health and longevity, he said that 60 is the prime of life and 90 is old age. As for the Party members divorced from the organization, he said that they were in jeopardy just like a baby away from its mum's bosom. As for officials' style of work, he taught that they should work in a seasoned and discreet way, saying that a monkey might fall from a fence as it trusts its skills too much, whereas a snake never falls as it is cautious of its safety.

Even when he had to set forth a task or point out a fault, he preferred telling an amusing story or a proverb to issuing a formal directive or order so that the people understood his intentions for themselves.

On March 13, 1959, he visited the Kyongsong Ceramic Factory.

With paternal affection of taking good care of the people's living, he looked round the factory, acquainting himself with its production in detail.

At the sorting workshop, he held a plate and had a careful look at it. Its quality had improved a little but still it was thick, not white and not in uniform size. He could not overlook the fault out of his desire to provide the people with better kitchen utensils.

Looking round at the young female moulders who came out to the yard to see him off, he said that the ceramics they made were not as beautiful as them. He continued to say that they should make sincere efforts to make the products beautiful just as they would wash their faces and do makeup in the morning.

His words with a smile made everybody laugh.

Before he left, he said that making ceramics was an art that required fineness and precision. Then he asked the workers if they could enhance the quality from the current level of three marks to that of five marks. When they answered they would surely do so, he left the factory with a light heart.

In the five-marks rating, three marks was near failing grade. However, he did not blame or reprimand them. Simply by employing an amusing figure of speech, he corrected their approach towards ceramics production.

It is a daily routine for women who love beauty to put on makeup

in order to make them look more beautiful. It is also a moral obligation of women, the flowers of society. His referring to such a vivid detail of life could not but prick everyone's conscience, however unfeeling they may be.

Later, when an improvement was made in the quality of the ceramics, he visited the factory again. Asking the chief engineer if he had any children, Kim Il Sung said that in order to become good fathers, they should make many more rice bowls for them. And then he encouraged the officials and workers to expand the range of products and increase production still further.

His words, not criticism nor reprimand, but humorous metaphor, led the officials and workers of the factory to feel the pricks of conscience, and later they achieved a great success in improving the quality of products and increasing their variety and quantity.

On July 16, 1964, teachers at Yaksu Middle School in Changsong County made a mistake of not making a proper ensemble while staging an artistic performance in front of Kim Il Sung. It had to be a performance of the best level possible as it was presented in front of the leader of the country, so the official of the school felt quite embarrassed.

But Kim Il Sung clapped his hands, saying, "You could do better if you are passionate. There is a saying that sincerity moves heaven. Well begun is half done. You have done well."

After the performance was over, he came to the lounge and praised for the performance. He said that the most important thing was the passion and general mobilization, and that the more they were passionate, the more they could develop.

His words were not long, but they contained his expectation and belief that passion was more important than skills, that passion would produce a better performance, and that, though their performance had not been perfect, they could make a development if they made passionate efforts as they had made a good start.

Kim Il Sung would say with humorous, witty and down-to-earth remarks.

When he saw bean curds or chicken on the table that had been simple the other days, he would ask whether it was a holiday. Once he told the officials that a small bird died after imitating the walk of a stork to emphasize that they must live with their own spirit and in their own way. At another time, when he visited a classroom of newly-enrolled primary school pupils, he saw a naughty boy whose knee was scratched; he bent his body feeling the boy's knee with his own hand, and asked him in which "battle" he was "wounded," exciting the laughter of the boys.

His way of speaking was the same when talking to foreigners and Korean compatriots living abroad, and even when meeting foreign heads of state.

When he was in the training base in the then Soviet Far East during the anti-Japanese armed struggle, a Russian officer ate frogs in the Korean soldiers' training base for he was so hungry, but later he was afraid lest his wife should know the fact. When he and his wife were present at a gathering, Kim Il Sung told the officer's wife that he had offered her husband a "heavenly chicken," a dish for special guests, and made all people around laugh by imitating the cry of a frog.

When he met artistes from China and heard that they had failed to climb as far as the Eight Pools in Mt Kumgang, he told them the tale of eight fairies associated with the pools, expressing his regret for their failure. He added that if there were bachelors among the artistes, they should have gone to the pools to meet the fairies.

When a banquet was held in celebration of his 80<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary he had the Pyongyang noodles with the heads of foreign countries. While having noodles, he told them that the noodles in a round brass bowl originated in the noble men's having the noodles with girl entertainers, making the foreign heads of state burst into laughter.

Once Chuji Kuno, member of the House of Representatives of Japan from the Liberal Democratic Party of Japan and former minister of Posts and Telecommunications, once said, "When a man talks as head of state, his words are very formal and his behaviour is overnice

and haughty as he says and behaves with his country's prestige or might as the background."

These words reflected the general tendencies of foreign heads of state he had met and talked to.

Kim Il Sung, however, approached people with human feeling, and talked to them in down-to-earth style.

A man cannot know others without knowing their life, and a man ignorant of life cannot be called so.

When talking to people, Kim Il Sung would say from the point of view of life, not that of business, and pay attention to establishing human relations with them, not businesslike relations. This intention naturally led his talks to the subjects related with life.

When he met officials, he asked about their health and family conditions before listening about their work, and when he met working people, he asked them first what their ages, native places and parents were. When he went to hostels, he inquired about the washing and bathing conditions, and when he went to people's houses, his first questions were the problems of water supply and fuel.

He would talk to foreigners in a very unceremonious way.

Once when he was visiting the then Soviet Union, he offered cucumber kimchi and insam liquor to the Soviet officials, asking them whether they ate hot dishes, and also offered them a glass of wine, saying that the Russians had the habit of drinking a glass

of wine before eating fish.

And saying that people prefer old friends and new clothes, he called a Soviet official, who had worked for about 30 years for the development of DPRK-Soviet relationship, his old friend.

His talks related to life covered very rich subjects, including the details of people's life and the traditions, habits and ways of diet of foreigners.

He did not like flowery words. His simple and clear words were so demotic that everybody was moved by them and liked listening to him. So those who listened to him speaking were always all smiles, and his words were the focus of their attention.

He was unceremonious when he was among the people. There is an oil painting in the kindergartens and nurseries in the country. It depicts Kim Il Sung wearing a sunny smile while sitting on a bench in a park and children around him—a boy is wearing the country's leader's hat on his head slightly askew and another boy is grasping his neck whispering something into his ear. All of the children look happy as if they were with their grandfather.

This simple oil painting shows the unaffected and warm relationship between the leader and the people and between the leader and the children, serving as a most beautiful painting portraying the outstanding leader who opened up a new path of human morality, political ethics and human traits for the history of mankind.

Whereas the feeling of intimacy and warmth permeated in the down-to-earth and plain words can be called the beauty of words, the trait of mingling with others unceremoniously can be called the beauty of behaviour.

Kim Il Sung worked and lived with the people on frank and friendly terms throughout his life. This was an expression of his ennobling view of the people.

The feeling of boundless respect for them and the ennobling view of believing in them as in heaven were the spiritual foundation on which he lived as the supreme leader of the Party and state.

In October 1971, Ryokichi Minobe, the governor of Tokyo, visited Pyongyang.

While looking round several places in the DPRK, he was deeply impressed by the ever-changing scenery of the socialist country, but what was incomprehensible was the fact that Kim Il Sung was visiting factories, farms and all other places as he chose.

It was natural for him to entertain such a doubt as, though he was the chief executive in the capital city of a country, he was afraid of walking on a street at will. And even when he was boarding an airplane to Pyongyang, he was attacked by Right-wing gangsters.

When he was meeting Kim Il Sung, he asked him whether he felt safe when he went anywhere.

Kim Il Sung told him about the WPK's policies toward private

traders and manufacturers and the old-time intellectuals. He continued: Why should I feel afraid of the people when I do good things for them? I am alright wherever I go; I go to the house building sites and factories; when I visit the rural areas, I sometimes sleep there before coming back.

Because he worshipped the people as his God, he was always with the people.

Once, when he met farmers who were weeding a field, he led them to the shade of a tree, himself sitting under the scorching sun, and said, “Shade should be available for you, farmers, who are working sweating in the field. It’s all right with me here.”

He regarded the masses of the people, who are the performers of the revolution, as his precious revolutionary comrades whom he should share life and death with and always rely on, and felt pride and pleasure of life in being with them.

He always went among the people and was with them because he missed them and wanted to be always with them.

He was not particular about time and place to be with them.

Approaching the people unceremoniously was an important key to waging the revolution, which he always believed in, whereas his ennobling view of regarding them as heaven and respecting them was the mental foundation on which to mingle with them unceremoniously.

He always approached the people without the slightest distance from them.

He was always on their side, and absolutely supported them at any time and in any place.

That was why he paid attention to working and living among them and found his pleasure in doing so.

The editor-in-chief of the Indian newspaper *Indian Times*, who was on a visit to Pyongyang to congratulate Kim Il Sung on the 55<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his birth, went to a province of the country to see him who was then on a field guidance trip.

After greeting him, Kim Il Sung said: I don't like celebrating my birthday; if I were in Pyongyang, officials and many other people would come to congratulate me on my birth anniversary; so in order to avoid it and also to guide provinces on the spot, I've come here; I prefer being with workers and farmers to participating in a birthday party in Pyongyang.

Sometimes when he felt a sign of making preparations for celebrating his birthday, he avoided it.

One day in the run-up to a national holiday, he cancelled his schedule of coming back to Pyongyang after giving field guidance in a province in order to celebrate the day with the local people.

He was always among the people, giving field guidance.

October 10, 1957 was the 12<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of

the Workers' Party of Korea.

On the day he was on the road of guiding North Phyongan Province on the spot.

When they heard he was visiting their home town, students of Tongju Middle School rushed out of their classrooms as soon as lessons were finished.

The students raised cheers as they saw him standing on the opposite bank of a river.

When he waved hands to them, they jumped into a boat.

And they jumped into the water before the boat arrived at the opposite bank.

When all the students came, he asked them if the day's lessons finished and if they were all good at school.

As he treated them unceremoniously, the students, in soaked clothes, vied with each other to get nearer to him.

Watching the scene, officials did not know what to do.

Unable to bear it any longer, an official shouted, "You, be polite."

Realizing that they were too impolite and innocent, they stepped back one after another.

Beckoning to them, Kim Il Sung said to the official, "Don't disturb them. I was busy so I couldn't go to their school. They have come this far to meet me. Just leave them."

The children rushed to him again.

Listening to their hopes and supporting the hopes, he asked them to have a photo taken before the sun set and led them all to a lawn.

Every one of them tried to get nearer to him.

The photographer could not place the focus on Kim Il Sung as there were too many students.

Kim Il Sung said: Place the focus on the student at the centre; the students should come out well in the photograph; be quick; the sun is setting.

It was really a scene reminiscent of that between a father and his sons.

The photo, preserved still today, tells of his love for the rising generations.

Once he told the officials who were assisting him: I have one thing to emphasize; don't interrupt me in meeting the people freely; when I visit a factory, I meet the workers to talk with them freely, and when I go to rural areas, I sit knee to knee with farmers to talk with them; you must not check this; people want to see me and I want to have a talk with them; I feel happy to meet the people and they regard seeing me as their happiness; of course, you may be worried about my personal security, but it is a needless worry; our people believe in the Party and support it sincerely, and I firmly believe in and respect them.

He found the greatest pleasure in being among the people.

One day during the Fatherland Liberation War he met model soldiers in a farm house. He told them to sit nearer to him, saying that they would feel more intimate if they sat nearer to one another. He proposed holding a recreation party, and he himself sang *Nostalgia*.

In view of the military ranks, the song the Supreme Commander sang in front of the rank-and-file soldiers was not a show of any emotion. It was a song of love of the great man who, not shackled by military ranks, wanted to treat the soldiers freely.

One day when he was visiting Turu Island, he met a farmer who was working in the field. He greeted him and offered his hand, but the farmer was hesitant and rubbed his hand on his trousers. He had just been manuring the field.

Kim Il Sung took him by the hand, saying: It's alright; the hands of farmers are all like that.

Among the photographs dealing with his revolutionary activities, many show him among the people unceremoniously. Noteworthy are those he posed with the people arm in arm; he posed with An Tal Su, a farmer, arm in arm, and with Ri In Mo, incarnation of faith and will, putting his hand on the shoulder of the latter on a wheelchair; in the photo taken while he was talking with Choe Yong Ok and her sisters, orphans, he is taking them by the wrist; when he met a young set of triplets, he posed with them in his embrace as if they were his grandchildren.

As he approached the people freely, some people failed to recognize him.

During the anti-Japanese revolutionary struggle, he was among people so freely in the guerrilla zone that one mistook him as the secretary general of the government of the zone. And in a noodle shop after the liberation of the country he behaved so unceremoniously that a farmer, having failed to recognize him, shouted to him for a cigarette.

When he met people of different nationalities, skin colours and languages, he was not particular about diplomatic conventions.

He received them warmly without rigid formality and pattern whether they were presidential-level persons or individuals.

When he was to visit Mauritania, the president of this country felt quite perplexed.

Although he had invited him to his country, he was not sure if the DPRK President, a world-renowned man, would come or not to his underdeveloped country, which had neither proper state guest house, conference hall nor banquet hall.

Even his French wife was embarrassed when she heard the DPRK President was coming.

But their worry vanished by a remark by Kim Il Sung.

Kim Il Sung said: I like to stay in tent and I lived in tent during the anti-Japanese struggle for 15 years; even though I am the

president of a state, why can I not stay in tent?

Being encouraged by the DPRK leader's unceremoniousness, who did not think ill of their bucolic life, they treated him at a banquet according to their customs.

So delighted by the visitor's respect for their customs, the Mauritanian president washed his hands and tore a roasted lamb with his own hands and offered a piece to him, saying that the lamb's breast was most delicious.

This time, too, Kim Il Sung didn't take ill of his behaviour and received the meat.

From olden times, it has been a custom for Mauritians to put rice in the belly of a sheep, roast it as a whole and tear it off before eating the pieces with the hand. They offer the meat with the hand even to their guests with the belief that the more the guests took the pieces, the more they feel intimate with each other.

According to the Korean custom, it is a misbehaviour, but Kim Il Sung took the meat without any complaint.

It was not the first time for him to eat roasted lamb in this way.

He did so in Algeria and Mongolia, too.

When he visited Bulgaria, though officials accompanying him dissuaded him, he posed for a photograph with the local Bulgarians shouldering a pole with two baskets filled with sweet cherry before a cherry field. It is a custom in that region in Bulgaria to greet

the guests of honour in that way.

As he respected traditions and customs of foreign countries and attached greater importance to friendship than to diplomatic conventions and practices, he could work effectively with foreigners wherever he went.

As he attached greater importance to human aspects when he met both his people and foreigners and approached them unceremoniously, his dignity, prestige and fame were exalted and his ennobling personality as a great man was etched in their hearts.

## **A Frugal Life**

Patriotic landowner Kim Jong Bu met Kim Il Sung during his stay at a secret camp of the Korean People's Revolutionary Army from late August 1936 to early 1937, when Korea was under Japanese military rule, and a magazine carried his interview with Kim Il Sung. Following is a part of the article.

“A man of considerable height, with a roaring voice, and a manner of speech, which suggests that he is from Phyongan Province. A virile young man in his twenties, much younger than he is generally imagined to be. He has a good command of Manchurian, with no affectation of being a commander, shares bed and board with his men, wearing the

same clothes as those of his men, and sharing weal and woe with them, with apparent influence and magnanimity.”

This article carried in detail and objectively the landowner’s feeling of the outstanding personality of Kim Il Sung at the time when news blackout was strict by the Japanese imperialists.

As the magazine reported before the country’s liberation, Kim Il Sung led a frugal life. He was humble anytime and anywhere. This was another feature of his ennobling personality as befitting a great man.

He grasped more correctly than anybody else the value and significance of a humble life in the formation of a man’s personality and in the revolutionary struggle.

His view on the genuine life of a man was that the more he leads a humble life, the better. When a man is humble, his personality grows higher and he can enjoy others’ respect and affection and easily mingle with them in his work and life—this was a valuable principle of life he verified through his practical struggle. So whenever he met officials, he used to say that they should always live in a frugal way, and he led them through his personal examples.

The manner of his frugal life remained unchanged not only in the struggle to liberate the country but also after the country’s liberation and in the years when his country was advancing to achieve prosperity. Even in his advanced years he remained the same.

His ennobling frugal life had taken root in the habit of living an upright life he had observed in his whole life, which was always beyond other people's imagination as his frugal life was based on his singular viewpoint on the wealth and property of a revolutionary.

From the early days when he embarked on the road of revolution, he cherished a unique viewpoint of regarding the lofty idea and ennobling spirit as the greatest wealth for a revolutionary. He met many people in his lifetime, but it was Kim Ju Hyon, a representative logistics officer of the Korean People's Revolutionary Army, whom he recognized as a real man of wealth.

Kim Ju Hyon devoted himself for the food, clothing and housing of the guerrillas in the whole period of the revolutionary struggle. After becoming a regimental commander, he continued to strive to solve those problems for his comrades-in-arms as he had done when he was a logistics officer. He fell in action, surprised by the enemy "punitive" troops, while gathering honey for the patients in a field hospital.

After he was killed, his comrades opened his pack to find almost nothing in it, not even the spare shoes carried by every guerrilla because he had given his last spare shoes to his comrade whose shoes had worn out. If all the grain, fabrics for military uniforms and shoes numbering thousands of pairs that he had obtained for the revolutionary army since he became a logistics officer had been piled up, it would have been as

high as a mountain but he left an empty pack. He was a proletariat in terms of property.

Recalling the day when his heart had burst into grief as he held the empty pack, Kim Il Sung wrote in his memoirs, *With the Century*;

“It is man’s nature to want a happy life, and many people in the world value only gold. From the viewpoint of such people, Kim Ju Hyon belonged to the have-nots. But to my mind he was really a man of great wealth, because all his life he had cherished a noble ideal and because he had a soul that could not have been bartered, even for a colossal sum of gold.”

As he cherished such a unique viewpoint on the wealth of a revolutionary and outlook on life, Kim Il Sung could live in a frugal way throughout his whole life, regarding the ideological and spiritual asset bequeathed by his parents as priceless heritage that was incomparable to any material wealth.

For him, money or material wealth were significant only when they were for the welfare of the people. He never linked money or wealth with his life.

Once, when an official gave him his salary that included expenses for his work as he had borne those expenses with his salary, he told him to return the extra money, saying that he was not allowed to violate the state’s financial discipline. And when a problem was raised at a Cabinet meeting that the salary of the president of

Kim Il Sung University was higher than Premier Kim Il Sung's, he stressed that there was no need to take a social position into consideration, and that as the university president was a scientist, he was obliged to receive a salary higher than his.

Shouldering all the state affairs in his whole life, he devoted his all for the Korean revolution, but he always refused the offer for a higher salary.

From his early years he was not interested in money. His father never gave his son money, and the same was the case with his mother. So he used the notebooks and pencils his mother had bought for him. When he was embarking on the road of the revolution, his mother gave him 20 *yuan* she had earned and saved penny by penny by working her fingers to the bone doing washing for pay; she did not give it to him for his living. It was a sort of fund for the revolution she gave him for emergency when a difficulty urgently needed money to break through.

If one is captivated by money or wealth, one may become scum, who is disloyal to his leader and Party, his country and fellow people and, worse still, thinks nothing of his parents, wife and children—this was his creed.

As he cherished such a noble creed, he donated all his savings for the happiness of the people.

One November day in 1993 a gathering for the settlement of accounts and distribution of grains was held at the Wonhwa

Cooperative Farm in Phyongwon County, South Phyongan Province. The gathering decided on presenting Kim Il Sung with his share of 102 485 *won*, which the farm had saved for over a decade—Kim Il Sung was an honorary member of the farm from the period of socialist cooperativization of agriculture after the war. It was a token of their gratitude to him for having illuminated the road their farm should take and shown concern on its work from the time when he had sown seeds in spring together with its farmers on a grim day of the war.

After hearing about the gathering, Kim Il Sung said: 100 000 *won*? I can be called a wealthy man; when they were organizing a cooperative, the peasants there had not a decent quilt.

As he was greatly satisfied, he sang to himself the lyrics of a song, *How should I spend this plentiful share of mine?*

He continued to say that as he became a rich man he could give the farm a treat—tractors, trucks and other farm machinery.

Some days later he calculated the sum of money for the equipment to be sent to the farm with his senior secretary, and then said, “104 300 *won*? It means 1 800 *won* more than that I have saved. I have no money. Will you lend me money? I will pay back with my share next year.”

The farmers went as far as 4 km ahead of the entrance to their farm to receive tractors, trailers and trucks, numbering 22. They went back to the farm with the machinery, singing and dancing.

After hearing this story, a politician from Europe said, “It is the first time for me to hear that the head of a state became an honorary member of a farm and received his share; it is also the first time that he bought for the farm tractors and trucks with that share. Many, many years have passed since humanity started farming, but this is a legendary tale.”

Kim Il Sung was always upright not only in approaching the property of the state and people but also in his daily life. It was his steadfast view that the public and private matters must not be mingled. If not, he maintained, it is only the interests of the people, which are encroached upon.

One day he learned that officials brought 14 fruit trees from a fruit farm to transplant them in the garden of his house. He reproached them, saying that the fruit farm was a precious wealth of the people to be handed down to the coming generations, and that no one was allowed to remove the wealth permeated with their laborious efforts. He told them to take them back to the farm at once.

During his field guidance at a region he learned that officials had a road and not so large a house being built for him. He sternly rebuked them: Why have you mobilized the people in their busy days? the state’s property is also the people’s property, and you are wasting them; one should take responsibility before the people if one has inflicted damage on the state’s property.

Numerous are the stories conveying the pure and honest spiritual

and moral traits of Kim Il Sung, who never allowed concession or deviation in the slightest degree as for the practices of violating the property of the state and the people irrespective of the motives.

Though he had had wonderful houses built for the people, he had not built one for his grandparents. Later he recollected with painful heart that he had done nothing special for them who had experienced ordeals, and that if there was anything he had done for them was that he had bought reading glasses for his grandmother. Indeed, he and his family members were simple, modest and upright.

He used to say to the officials, “Anyone of us must not exceed the living standards of the people.” And he set a personal example in this regard. Soon after the country’s liberation he rectified the proportion of supply for officials, and stressed that even the head of state must not receive a special supply. He did not violate these regulations in his family life; the money used by his family was the wage he received, and what his family members consumed did not exceed the quantity fixed by the state.

In praise of his exploits the Korean people, overseas compatriots and figures across the world presented many gifts, wishing him to enjoy a long life in good health. But he always gave them back to the people working in the challenging and labour-consuming fields and other meritorious working people; he bought things at shops after paying money to cashier like other people.

In the celebrated Mt Myohyang there is the International Friendship Exhibition House. Housed in this grand monument in the era of the Workers' Party of Korea are gifts presented to President Kim Il Sung by heads of state, party leaders, prominent figures, organs and associations of foreign countries. Following is a story about how the structure was named the International Friendship Exhibition House and became a site of tourism for the people at home and abroad.

In the past Korea had had to present invaluable and rare things to other countries as gifts, but after Kim Il Sung stood at the helm of the ruling Workers' Party of Korea and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea it received countless presents from many countries and people across the world. This was a token of international recognition of and praise for his ideology, leadership and exploits and a reflection of the world people's trust in and attraction to his ennobling personality.

He, however, never regarded these gifts as his own. He said: All gifts I have received from other countries do not belong to me, an individual, but to the country; so, all of them should be preserved at a gifts exhibition house; as the gifts are national treasures of historical significance, they should be preserved properly.

When an exhibition house was built at an excellent place in Mt Myohyang and gifts were exhibited there, he said: If we fail to preserve the valuable gifts properly, the coming generations would scold us; we should preserve and exhibit them properly and show

them to foreigners as well as our people.

This is how the exhibition house was named the International Friendship Exhibition House, a tourist attraction.

Statesmen in general do not open to public the gifts they have received from others. Proceeding from the view that the gifts are an expression of their personalities and dignity, they preserve them as individual property or use them. In case they show them to others, they regard it as a source of pride for his personality.

However, Kim Il Sung had the gifts to him become national treasures and symbols of dignity and might of his people. He looked round in detail treasures and historical relics across the country, including the Three-Revolution Exhibition House, Central History Museum and Mausoleum of King Tongmyong, but he failed to look round all the gifts displayed in the International Friendship Exhibition House until the last days of his life.

Regarding a lofty ideology and sound spirit, not money or wealth, as the foremost wealth for a revolutionary, he lived in a frugal manner all his life.

He was also simple in diet, clothing and other aspects of his life.

His creed was that a revolutionary should feel content with eating anything if he can make the revolution. His favourite dishes were nothing special—boiled cereals, bean paste soup and stew, pickled garlies, kimchi, seasoned wild herbs, pickled shrimps and others that

the Koreans, whoever they are, are fond of. His favourite dishes, if any, were frozen potato starch noodles, uncrushed maize porridge, potato cake and boiled pumpkins.

He counted salt as the most delicious thing in the world. It was because salt is a condiment indispensable to people's daily living.

When an official unbosomed to Ri Po Ik, Kim Il Sung's grandmother, his failure to serve her grandson any special food, she said, "I can understand you. But, how can you change the inborn nature of the General from a common family? Sorry but I have no other option."

Kim Il Sung was very simple in clothing and footwear.

This happened one morning in early July in 1984, when Kim Il Sung was giving field guidance in North Hamgyong and Ryanggang provinces after winding up his visit to the European socialist countries.

While they were saying good morning to him who was strolling in a garden, officials were surprised to see him; wearing a Western suit with a tie, he was all smiles.

Acknowledging their greetings, he said, "Do I look like a smart dandy? As you look happy, I do look like a real gentleman, don't I?"

Then he told them how he came to wear the attire.

When members of the delegation to the European countries were wearing Western suits with ties, only Kim Il Sung wore a closed-

collar jacket. This weighed on Chairman Kim Jong Il's mind. So, he had a Western suit prepared for him. Presenting it to him as soon as he returned, Kim Jong Il said in real earnest: You have so far undergone hardships wearing a military uniform or closed-collar suit; from now on I will shoulder all the state affairs wearing a closed-collar suit; please work while taking a rest now and then wearing this attire.

Telling them this and as if making a boast, he took a platinum pocket watch out of his jacket pocket. The watch, with a scale plate and figures on it quite visible to the naked eye of even the elderly, was also prepared by Kim Jong Il.

He said that as he wore this suit he felt as if the fatigue accumulated since he fought in the mountain had vanished.

He once wore a Western suit before. It was prepared by the anti-Japanese war veterans in the year when the country was liberated. Kim Il Sung made a triumphal return to his motherland wearing a military uniform impregnated with the powder smoke from the battles against the Japanese imperialists. The anti-Japanese war veterans, who were assisting him in his work beside him, discussed on preparing a suit for him. So they bought cloth and had a suit made. Receiving the suit, Kim Il Sung told them that he had been worried as he had no street wear, and that they had relieved his worry.

He had to deliver a speech on his triumphal return and meet numerous figures from all walks of life in the liberated country, but

he had no street wear. An anti-Japanese war veteran said that he would buy quality cloth and have a spare suit made for him. But he refused his proposal, saying that he was satisfied with the suit they had prepared. And he continued: Though the country is liberated, our people are still ill-clad and some are wearing coarse hemp clothes, and it is unreasonable for me to wear good clothes; I will wear such clothes when all our Korean people would wear quality clothes by hastening the building of a new country.

This is how he, in a Western suit, delivered a triumphal speech and visited Mangyongdae, his birthplace, to meet his grandparents. And his beaming image in a Western suit was recorded for the first time in documentaries and photos portraying his revolutionary activities.

However, he did not wear a Western suit again later. As he was concerned for providing the people with better clothing, he always thought it was too early for him to wear a Western suit prepared with quality cloth.

His demand on clothing was not different for his family members and relatives. He dissuaded the anti-Japanese war veterans from preparing good clothes for his grandparents in Mangyongdae, who were living with no proper clothes even after the country's liberation.

He only said that when all the people were living happily, he would

prepare good clothes for his grandfather and uncle. As he knew too full well his grandson's true heart, the grandfather, when officials were feeling sorry for not having prepared a decent clothes for him, said, "Do not worry yourself about us. I am very glad to see him worrying over all the common people. From olden times, a man who is too much concerned about household affairs cannot become a great man."

Kim Il Sung wore such clothes prepared with ordinary cloth, and worked for the good of the people.

There is no rule that a luxurious wear is appropriate when going among the masses; if I wear uncommon clothes, the workers and farmers would find it difficult to approach me with ease—this was his opinion on clothing. The reason why he always wore a closed-collar jacket in his lifetime was nothing special; when the collars are closed, the part looks like the Chinese character 人 (meaning people in English) and the Korean people are fond of wearing it in ordinary days.

He worked wearing this jacket to mingle unceremoniously among the people, whom he loved and valued much. It is a custom that those active in the international political or diplomatic arena wear a Western suit with a tie, but he did not shackle himself to this custom. Even though his clothes were humble, he felt more comfortable and happier if he could mingle with the people and enjoy their support.

As he was strict in the criterion of clothing, he felt so grateful

for having received an unlined jacket made of hemp cloth, which a countrywoman had weaved, that he tried it on in front of her and remembered the day now and then later on. When officials were going to have new clothes made with quality cloth as his clothes had discoloured, he would say that the clothes felt good when visiting factories and rural areas, telling them to turn the cloth inside out and mend it. One day, when he was crossing a rugged pass to take a morning exercise and meet the bereaved children at the same time, his padded coat made with mixed-spun textile was torn a little by a tree branch. Saying that it was not unreasonable for him to wear a patched coat, he asked officials to have it mended.

Kim Il Sung preferred shoes and socks the people used. When he had to meet foreign guests, attend a conference or work in his office, he used to put on leather shoes, but in usual days he would put on plimsolls the kind of which ordinary people put on.

One winter day officials saw the linings of his leather shoes worn out as he had worn them for a long time. They planned to replace them with new ones. Informed of it, he said it was wasteful to throw the shoes away, adding that the shoes still looked good and indicating how the linings could be mended. When the shoes were mended, he, pleased, said that the shoes were as good as new ones.

His favourite socks were cotton ones available in any shop. In the days of the fierce Fatherland Liberation War, he continued his

inspection tours to the rear and front with only a few pairs of socks to wear, when he happened to get quality socks, he would give them to an accompanying official or young guardsman.

His frugal personality was not confined to the aspect of his diet and clothing. Everything he used was frugal beyond others' imagination, ordinary things available everywhere.

He was the leader of a country. In a family in general the best room is designated for the head of the family. However, wherever he went, he was never fastidious about his office and lodging.

In 1976 the Kumsusan Assembly Hall (the present Kumsusan Palace of the Sun) was built as the Presidential palace. But, to say nothing of the previous years, even after the construction of the palace, he was on the road of field guidance most of the time; so there were no special office, dining room or bedroom for him. Ordinary places where the people worked and lived, including a farm cottage, a pit where water was dropping from the ceiling or his train was his office and bedroom.

When mapping out the operations plan for defending the coastal line in the Wonsan area and making a far-reaching plan to open up a strategic phase during the Fatherland Liberation War, he stayed in a humble, small room of a cottage in a mountain village in Poptong County, Kangwon Province. And he made preparations for the historic Third Plenary Meeting of the Central Committee of the Workers' Party

of Korea in a cottage in Hyangha-ri, Janggang County, Jagang Province, into which smoke blew when the room was heated with wood.

Both in the days when the country was undergoing difficulties and in the days when it was witnessing a great turn in postwar rehabilitation and construction of houses and public buildings, he blamed officials for planning to build his house or office building, saying that the people would criticize him for it. He had the construction project suspended and school, kindergarten or hospital built in place.

Stalin once presented a car to Kim Il Sung in praise of him. It was bullet-proof one of high performance built on the special order of Stalin. The car became worn-out as it ran ceaselessly to different places for building a new country and through the flames of war.

Officials raised an opinion that the car be replaced by a new one.

One August day in 1962, while coming outside after winding up a meeting during his field guidance at Changsong County, he saw his chauffeur maintaining the car. He approached to him, and said, “This car is now worn out, isn’t it?” And he looked at the car with watchful eyes before asking about the horsepower of the engine of *Sungni-58* automobile produced in the country. After hearing a reply that it was 70, he said that as the horsepower of the engine of his car was 70, it could be put on the road without letup if the engine was replaced with that of *Sungni-58* automobile.

He continued: Now the country is using money penny by penny as it

was raised by the people through their painstaking efforts; as we have not enough money, we fail to supply the people with sufficient amounts of shoes; if you have money to buy a new car for me, I will have one more pair of shoes bought for the people; it seems that if this car is repaired well, I can use this car in the future, too; I want you to repair this car properly without buying a new car.

The words were permeated with the sincerity of the President, who visited every part of the country day and night for the sake of the Party, revolution, country and people, but always strived to contribute to the people's living by saving even a little. He even used a fan made by a housewives' cooperative in a city.

His frugal way of life continued until the last days of his life. His way of life was so frugal, incomparable to his fame and exploits he achieved in his life, that the Korean people recollect his life with deep emotion. He still lives in the hearts of the Korean people as a frugal and upright man.

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Even today, the great personality of President Kim Il Sung is teaching the Korean people in their living. The year of his 113<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary has come, but his noble personality, which the great man kept unchanged from his youth to the last days of his life, will live in the hearts of the Korean people together with their yearning for him.

The career of a great man continues forever.

The Korean people, who always remember President Kim Il Sung, will hold him as the eternal leader of the nation and pray for his immortality generation after generation.

## **GREAT MAN**

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Translated by Kim Yong Nam and Choe Kwang

Published by Foreign Languages Publishing House,  
DPR Korea

Issued in April 2025

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ㄱ - 250880297094

E-mail: [flph@star-co.net.kp](mailto:flph@star-co.net.kp)

<http://www.korean-books.com.kp>

**Foreign Languages Publishing House**  
**DPR Korea**  
**2025**

